

FREE

Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk September 7, 2014

North & West Edition No 624

TRANSPORT »

Go, and don't come back

Special report: Boris sent packing as his airport dream takes a nosedive

POLICING »

Your chance to quiz PCC Ann Barnes

Commissioner takes part in Q&A with readers

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Here's hoping Boris doesn't come back here any time soon

POOR old Boris. He huffed and he puffed and he could not blow down an area precious to so many of us.

So as we bid farewell to the London Mayor's Thames Estuary airport proposal, we suggest a collective crossing of fingers that it doesn't emerge again any time soon.

Many believe the opposition to the airport was a simple case of a resistance to change. But it was always much more than that. Yes, there was a certain element of so-called Nimbyism involved, but tell me any community who would want to see an area of such natural significance decimated and the lives of so many thousands blighted forever more by the roar of jet engines?

Unsurprisingly, we've got extensive coverage of the decision to dismiss the estuary plans inside this weekend's edition, and I'd

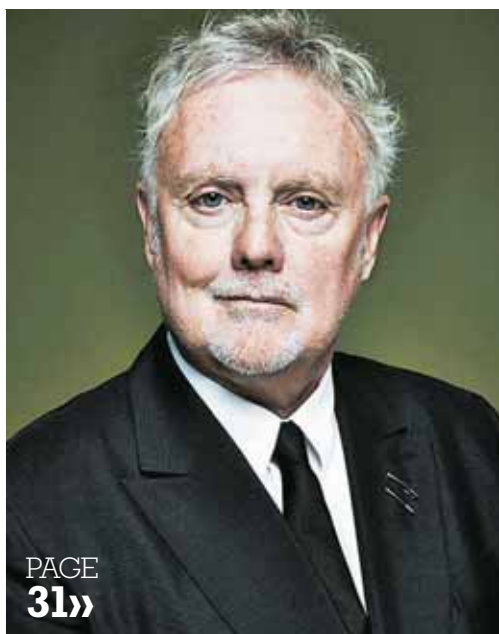


Editor **Chris Britcher**

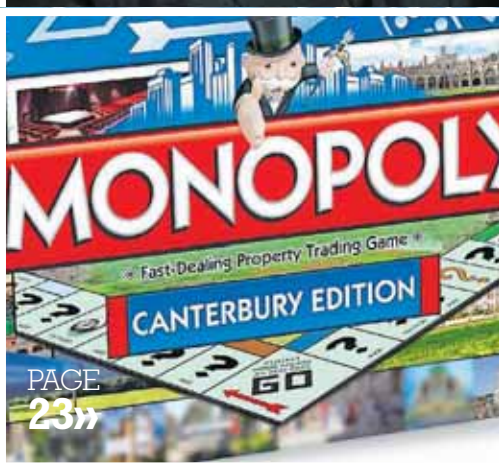
urge you all to let us know your views on the ruling of the Davies Commission - as ever, we'll print the best on our letters' page.

Elsewhere, we take a close up look at the shifting sands of the political scene - especially in the light of further rumoured defections from the Conservatives to Ukip. Once again, Europe divides the Tories - only this time the disillusioned have a ship to jump to. The uncertainty and in-fighting certainly whets the appetite for next year's General Election, which will surely be the most open and unpredictable for a generation.

There's also the opportunity, starting this week, to put your questions directly to the often controversial figure of police and crime commissioner Ann Barnes, who has kindly agreed to field your questions. See page 7 for details. Have a good weekend.



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Campaigners braced for fresh Lodge Hill battle

By Sarah Linney

sarah.linney@archant.co.uk

PLANS to build 5,000 homes on an area of protected countryside which is a nationally significant bird habitat were approved by Medway Council on Thursday night.

The proposals to develop the Lodge Hill site at Chattenden – one of the biggest planning applications ever to come to Medway – were given outline permission by the planning committee in front of a packed council chamber.

When previously proposed it was rejected on the grounds of the site being home to one per cent of the UK's nightingale population, which has declined by 90 per cent in the last 50 years.

Despite hundreds of letters objecting to the application, which would destroy the Chattenden Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest, and just six in favour, the committee gave the plans the go-ahead in principle.

However, because the decision is so significant it will be referred to the secretary of state for the environment and Natural England, which opponents hope will see it thrown out. The council was



UNDER THREAT: Plans for 5,000 homes, schools, shops and leisure facilities are back on the agenda

already told to scrap a previous version of the plans by the planning inspectorate.

The RSPB called the committee's decision "dreadful".

Spokeswoman Sue Royal said: "This will destroy a large part of a nationally important site. It represents the worst destruction of an SSSI in the last two decades.

"It goes against the national planning framework. We feel it needs to be examined in a public inquiry."

Outline permission means

developers Land Securities have still to submit a detailed design for the plans, which would involve building 5,000 homes, shops, three primary schools, a secondary school,

medical and leisure facilities by redeveloping Chattenden Barracks and the Lodge Hill training area on the Hoo Peninsula.

The development would house 11,500 people and is expected to create around 5,000 jobs.

Habitat compensation measures have been proposed, but the

council's own report admits that it "cannot be guaranteed that the proposed measures would provide suitable nesting habitat for a large number of nightingales".

Robin Cooper, Medway Council's director for regeneration, community and culture, said: "This will play a substantial role in providing Medway with the new homes and facilities it needs to cater for the growing population and provide much needed jobs for our young people."

Immigrants storm port in bid to board ferry as French pressure grows

PRESSURE is growing for Europe-wide action on the flood of immigrants travelling through France and trying to force their way into the UK, after more than 100 attempted to storm a cross-Channel ferry in Calais this week.

Ferry crews had to raise the ramp which allows cars on to the P&O ferry and then turn a water hose on the immigrants.

It is understood they had climbed over fences and overpowered security staff. The port confirmed around 100 migrants had broken into the port complex, raising serious concerns over security.

It is just the latest drama which has seen immigrants, for years, attempt to jump on the back of lorries in a bid to gain entry into the UK through Kent.

Earlier in the week, the Mayor of Calais threatened to block the port altogether to try and put a stop to the problem. She blamed the UK for the situation and insisted something be done by our Government to ease the

growing problem.

Natacha Bouchart said her town was being "taken hostage" by more than 1,000 migrants trying to get to England, primarily from the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

She said: "I could take the decision to block the port ... I could bring pressure to bear. It would be illegal but today I want to make a strong gesture towards the British."

Just last week the French interior minister Bernard Cazeneuve met with home secretary Theresa May to discuss the mounting concerns.

In a joint statement they promised increased co-operation to "strengthen our efforts and find new solutions to alleviate the impact on these migrant numbers on the Calais population and its economy".

It had been hoped the dismantling of the Sangatte camps in 2002 – which saw hundreds of immigrants gather – would put an end to the problems, but they have sprung up once more. Now hundreds are believed to live rough in the area.

Demands for safety steps on anniversary of 130-car smash

FRIDAY marked the first anniversary of the 130-vehicle pile-up on the Sheppey Crossing – with safety campaigners frustrated at a lack of steps taken to protect motorists since.

The crash, in thick fog, left eight people seriously injured and 60 others hurt. Remarkably, no one died.

Concerns over safety first emerged when the bridge was built in 2006. Police and politicians warned against the design, which

has no hard shoulders or lighting, but these were overlooked due to cost.

The issues were raised again earlier this summer when a mother and her eight-year-old son were killed on the bridge.

Swale Ukup councillor Mike Baldock said: "Some parts of the road aren't very visible for drivers, and as there is no hard shoulder, if someone breaks down it spells serious trouble."

Cable confirmed as guest speaker at business forum

BUSINESS secretary Vince Cable will be in Maidstone later this month.

The senior Liberal Democrat will be guest speaker at a business forum to be staged at the Maidstone Hilton.

He will address an audience of local business figures who will be given the opportunity to learn about the Coalition's economic plans for the remainder of this

parliament.

The event takes place on September 23.

While in the county town, he will team up with Liberal Democrat candidate at the General Election, Jasper Gerard, to launch a forum for local apprenticeships – part of an initiative introduced by Mr Cable and designed to help companies hire apprentices.



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Seafront Pleasurama site set for a new dawn?

THE long-running saga of the Pleasurama site on Ramsgate seafront will take another twist on Thursday when the local council considers a proposal by building firm Cardy to take over the project.

The council served a breach notice on current developers SFP Ventures (UK) Ltd earlier this year as the necessary first step towards terminating the existing agreement, which envisages construction of a

hotel, residential and commercial units.

That triggered a mediation process, as part of which SFP's owners have now indicated their willingness in principle to enter into an agreement for Cardy's to acquire the company and with it the existing contract with the council.

The original deal dates back to 2006, since when the prime site has remained empty.



DOCKYARD: The Duke of Kent

Royal visit to remember war casualties

THE Duke of Kent is set to make a special visit to the Historic Dockyard Chatham later this month, in memory of more than 1,000 men who died when three boats were lost during the First World War.

The service on September 22 will mark the sinking of three Royal Navy cruisers - HMS Aboukir, HMS Hogue and HMS Cressy - which were sunk on September 22, 1914 in the North Sea off the Dutch coast.

Some 1,459 men died - 1,264 of whom were from the Chatham port division.

The service will be led by the Right Reverend Dr Stephen Venner, with music from the Royal Marines band and a Royal Navy guard on parade.

Also in attendance will be the Lord Lieutenant of Kent, the First Sea Lord, other senior Royal Navy and military officers, civic dignitaries from Kent and the Netherlands, members of the Live Bait Squadron Society and relatives of those who died in the tragedy.

The duke will unveil a plaque commemorating the loss of the three cruisers and the Mayor of Medway will hand a poppy wreath to the Mayor of The Hague, which will be laid at a Dutch service two days later.

Some 1,459 poppy petals, one for every life lost, will fall during the event.

Hospitals plunged into special measures after report reveals 'failings'

By Sarah Linney

sarah.linney@archant.co.uk

THREE Kent hospitals have been placed in special measures after inspectors found "care failings" and "inadequate safety".

The East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust, which comprises the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford, the Kent and Canterbury Hospital and the QEOM Hospital in Margate, was denounced as "inadequate" last month in a report by England's chief inspector of hospitals.

Professor Sir Mike Richards said he had encountered "care failings across the majority of services" during a Care Quality Commission inspection which rated safety and leadership at the trust as inadequate.

"A number of clinical services were poorly led, and there were concerns about staffing levels in a number of areas, especially in A&E, in children's care, and at night," his report said.

"Risks to patients were not always



FAIL: Kent & Canterbury Hospital

identified, and where they were, were not always acted on by the trust."

However, the hospitals were praised for being caring.

The William Harvey and the Kent and Canterbury Hospital were rated

inadequate but the QEOM was given the next rating up, "requires improvement".

Now Monitor, which regulates health services in England, will appoint an improvement director who will oversee the trust's progress.

The trust has even been told that if it doesn't improve, the regulator may take "further action" and possibly replace members of its leadership team.

Chief executive Stuart Bain said: "We are investing an additional £2.9 million to recruit 69 nurses - 55 have been recruited already. We have appointed an additional four surgeons and will be recruiting a further three.

"We identified the need to improve our appointment system some time ago and have just completed a public consultation on our outpatient services.

"New appointment booking systems, more flexible appointments, and an investment of £28 million in improved facilities, including a new hospital in Dover, will start to address these issues."

Spa town launches car loan pilot project

A CAR loan scheme has been launched in Tunbridge Wells, allowing those signing up to the scheme to borrow vehicles from dedicated parking bays.

The car club pilot project begins on Tuesday, initially with two cars available - and left parked opposite the Town Hall.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council is trialling the project with a social enterprise company, Co-wheels, which will invest any profit back into the scheme. There is no cost to the tax-payer.

Once registered, drivers can book a car online for short or long distance journeys for as little as 30 minutes or as long as 10 days. Drivers pay either £3.75 per hour or a day rate of £17.50 plus 13p per mile.

The council is the first borough authority in the county to offer this kind of car club and hopes it will assist with those who don't want to pay all the associated costs which come with keeping and maintaining a car.

Warning over danger of chimney fires

FIRE crews are reminding people who have chimneys to make sure they are safe, clean and properly maintained ready for the winter.

Kent Fire and Rescue are advising people to make sure chimneys are cleaned by a registered sweep, a fire guard is used to protect against sparks, embers are properly put out before going to bed and smoke alarms are working.

With a coal, oil or gas fire, chimneys may need to be swept just once or twice a year, but if you have a wood fire it should be cleaned every three months.

Head of community safety, Lee Rose, explained: "There are about 300 chimney fires a year in Kent and Medway and most of them are preventable.

"At this time of year all chimneys and flue-ways should be cleaned and checked to ensure they're free from debris and in full working order before the winter.

"A blocked or defective chimney can cause fires and carbon monoxide poisoning."

Chanel and Dior fakes found in Dutch lorry

A MAJOR investigation is under way by Trading Standards officers after a £10million haul of counterfeit cosmetic gift sets were uncovered in the back of a Dutch lorry at the Channel Tunnel terminal.

The 578 boxes, many of which claimed to be from some of the top global brands, were discovered by Border Force officials at the French entrance. The lorry was en route to a business park in Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Kent County Council's Trading Standards manager Mark Rolfe added: "This is one of the biggest hauls of counterfeit goods we have ever encountered.

"As soon as we examined the items, it was clear from errors with the labelling and instructions that the cosmetics were definitely fake. The makes involved include Dior, Chanel, Bobbi Brown and MAC. We have now sent samples for testing so that we can determine whether these cosmetics were actually dangerous as well as counterfeit."

Candid commissioner ready to answer your most probing questions

KENT on Sunday is giving our readers the chance to put their questions directly to Kent's Police and Crime Commissioner Ann Barnes.

Mrs Barnes has never strayed far from the headlines since she was elected to the post in November 2012.

And now you can put your questions directly to her – with no topic out of bounds.

In her role as the county's first ever crime commissioner, she is tasked with overseeing the chief constable and holding him to account in delivering policing across Kent, while also overseeing funding.

She has no say on operational matters – those decisions remain firmly with the chief constable.

But she is certainly influential within a force facing some of the most damaging cuts in recent history, and the public's continued fear of crime and desire to see more 'Bobbies on the beat'.

As an independent candidate, she has certainly managed to raise the awareness of

a position which has attracted many critics since being introduced by the Coalition to provide an individual accountable for the police force.

Since being elected, she's had some notable victories, including the establishment of a round-the-clock Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Maidstone, and has recently put pressure on the Prime Minister to stop the Kent taxpayer having to foot the bill for the renewal of fire arm licences.

Her two-year spell in charge has not been without incident, however.

Problems over the appointment of Paris Brown as her youth commissioner, and a misjudged Channel 4 documentary which set out to look at the role, but ended up making Mrs Barnes something of a figure of fun, has blotted her copy book.

One thing she has certainly achieved is to ensure the public know who she is and the role she holds.

As the previous high-on invisible head of the Kent Police Authority – which the office



QUESTION TIME:
Ann Barnes will open up to KoS readers

of commissioner replaced – she has become a visible presence.

Now she has vowed to answer our readers openly and honestly.

All you need to do is email, tweet or write to us with your question. We'll then select the best and most probing and put them to Mrs Barnes in person.

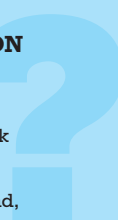
All the responses will be published in a future edition of Kent on Sunday.

To put your question to Mrs Barnes, simply email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk and put in the subject line 'Ann Barnes Q&A'. Or, alternatively, email them to The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford

TN25 1PP. All questions must be received no later than noon on September 30. Alternatively, you can tweet your question to us on Twitter – see below for details.

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Outlet unveils vision to double in size to create entertainment hub

It's good news for county's shopaholics as Ashford's McArthurGlen proposes to increase number of stores while having closer ties with under pressure high street businesses, writes **Sarah Linney**

A MAJOR designer outlet complex has revealed its plans to almost double in size under dramatic expansion plans.

Ashford's McArthurGlen had announced it intended to increase capacity earlier this year – but on Wednesday shoppers got their first glimpse at the scale of the plans.

Work is expected to start as early as next year, if approved, which would see the outlet grow to almost 150 stores and become one of the largest designer outlets in the UK.

However, it has prompted fears it may further drain yet more retailers and customers from the traditional town centre. The town has, like other high streets, seen a steady decline over recent years, as shoppers instead look to the internet or out-of-town retail hubs.

In 2007, Ashford's County Square shopping centre doubled in size as a result of a £65 million investment, but it coincided with the economic slump which forced many major retailers, and tenants, out of business, leaving many units empty.

The outlet's growth would expand it towards the existing town centre from its current site on Kimberly Way, and closer to the nearby international train terminal.

Centre chiefs, however, insist it will complement the existing town centre.

There will be a jobs boost, as a consequence, and the plan is to make the centre an entertainment destination, as well as a shopping hub.

Although bosses remain tight lipped as to which brands might be setting up shop, the company says it intends to submit a planning application to Ashford Borough Council next month on the proposals.

The area around the centre is also set to benefit, with improvements planned for the crossing on Newtown Road and the riverside footpath from the station to the outlet.

"Ashford is a greatly successful centre and customers seem to constantly demand more and more brands from us," McArthurGlen managing director Sven Gaede explained.

"We have many new brands looking to open at Ashford, many of whom are already at our other centres."

The expansion will take place in two stages, the first of which will start next year and is expected to finish in late 2016 or early 2017.

This will see the centre extended out across the car park and drop-off area at the front, right down to Newtown Road to make way for more than 30 new shops, cafes and restaurants.

The food court and play area will be knocked down to make way for some of the new units: a new play area will be built elsewhere in the centre, and the food outlets are also expected to move to different units.

The 300 or so lost parking spaces will be replaced on land opposite the supermarket Asda which is currently the next door to the complex.

In the second stage, the outlet will expand further onto land between Newtown Road and the station, almost doubling in size from the mere 185,000sq ft it occupies now and ending just 100 metres from the station.

Work on this stage will not start until about 2017, to finish in 2019.

Far from taking shoppers away from Ashford town centre, outlet bosses are confident the two will complement one another.

"The aim is to have some connectivity with the town centre so we can work together," centre manager David Maddison explained.

"We want to go nearer the town and they want to move closer to us so Ashford becomes one shopping centre."

"The people who shop in the town centre will still shop there – you can't do your banking at the outlet, or go to WHSmith's, Boots or the hairdressers."

He said the aim was to attract new customers from outside the county – and outside the country.

"One of the biggest ways we are looking to grow is through High Speed 1. It's a big opportunity to draw people from London," he added.

"People who live in Ashford already shop with us. What we will do is draw more people in, and that has to be a positive thing if we can contribute to extra footfall in the town centre."

The proportion of restaurants in the centre is expected to increase from about 10 per cent to between 15 and 20 per cent or even more – in outlets like Westfield, in Stratford, the proportion is about 30 per cent.

As well as outside seating where diners can enjoy eating al fresco, there will be an events area where bands can play.

"We are trying to make it not just about shopping, but about the experience. So that even if you just come for a coffee and a cake you will have a super experience," Mr Gaede said.

"Our chairman says we are in the entertainment business – and I think he is right about making sure people enjoy themselves."

However, fans of the striking tented design – which is not to everyone's taste but which has made the outlet a landmark – may be disappointed to hear that the extensions will not fea-



HANDBAGS AND GLAD RAGS: The new-look McArthurGlen would become out of the biggest outlets in the UK

BRIEF HISTORY...

MCARTHURGLEN opened the UK's first designer outlet at Cheshire Oaks, near Manchester, in 1995 and now has six outlets across the country.

The Ashford outlet opened in 2000 and is the world's largest tented retail structure, currently occupied by 81 shops, cafes and restaurants on its 185,000sq ft site. It was designed by Sir Richard Rogers, who also worked on the Millennium Dome and the Pompidou Centre in Paris.

In contrast with the town centre, the outlet is almost fully let, with brands including Ted Baker, Kurt Geiger, Links of London, Radley, Reiss, Superdry and Molton Brown.

It attracted more than three million shoppers in 2013 and saw a 55 per cent rise in sales between January and July compared with 2012.

ture the same look.

"Our aim is to try to meld them together as well as possible, but not to replicate the tent structure," Mr Gaede explained.

"We have the opportunity now to do something a little new and different. It would be wrong to remove the tents, but it would be right to move it on."

"A lot of work is going to be done on the front of the centre so it has a nice, green, warm feel," Mr Maddison added.

"We will be refreshing the fascias to make sure they look elegant."

The company will also be working with Kent Highways on measures to make the crossing on Newtown Road safer and slow traffic down.

Options being mooted include narrowing of the road, traffic lights at the roundabout, speed bumps and even a shared space crossing.

The footpath leading from the outlet to the domestic station – a somewhat isolated route under an underpass which is far from being Ashford's most pleasant walk – will also be improved.

"A lot of work is being done by our landscape architect on developing this area," Mr Maddison said.

"We want to make the whole route

nicer, safer, smarter and a bit more illuminated, and to have our security people there. It is not just about building more space, but making sure that from a customer point of view the access to that space is made easier," Mr Gaede added.

The number of people employed at the centre is set to more than double to around 2,000 employees.

In addition, the centre is working with the John Wallis Academy to develop a retail academy at the Kingsnorth school, which will offer a two-year BTEC in retail development – and the plan is for apprenticeships to be available at the centre. The course starts this month and more than 20 students have already enrolled.

"We want to make sure the people who work in these stores are of a very high quality," Mr Maddison explained.

"We would like the number of students on the course to be in the hundreds by the second year. It is giving kids an option – instead of saying 'university or bust', this is an option for those who want to go down another route."

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BORIS Johnson may not be prepared to admit defeat gracefully (see next page), but for the vast majority in Kent, news that proposals for a multi-billion pound international hub airport in the Thames Estuary have been shelved were met with scenes of jubilation.

For years, long, dark shadows have been cast across much of the north of the county amid a relentless bid by the London Mayor to shift the south east's aviation focus from west London to the estuary.

Dubbed 'Boris Island', after original proposals outlined plans on reclaimed land before the focus switched to runways on the Hoo Peninsula, the final nail in its coffin was hammered home at 7am on Tuesday morning by the Davies Commission.

Or, at least, so it appears. There remain nagging concerns it may yet take flight when another review, at some point in the future, is called for.

The independent body had been appointed by the Government to examine the options to increase south east aviation capacity – seen as an essential plank in reinforcing the UK economy and tackling the threat posed by other nations developing major airport terminals.

After confirming Gatwick and Heathrow expansion plans were on the shortlist last December, it prolonged the agony for Kent by saying further research into the viability of the estuary proposal was needed.

On Tuesday morning, it made its ruling that it was dead in the water.

In his report, commission chairman, the economist Sir Howard Davies, described the idea as a "very risky project".

He said: "The proposal has substantial disadvantages that collectively outweigh its potential benefits.

"The economic disruption would be huge and there are environmental hurdles which it may prove impossible or very time-consuming to surmount.

"Even the least ambitious version of the scheme would cost £70 to £90



billion, with much greater public expenditure involved than in other options – probably some £30 to £60bn in total. More ambitious schemes would cost considerably more.

"The implications for passengers

are also unfavourable. The average rail journey to the airport on opening would be 20 to 25 per cent longer than is the case today."

George Crozer, from the Friends of the North Kent Marshes, was drinking Champagne when Kent on Sunday called him shortly after the announcement.

"I am extremely happy that this is off the cards," said Mr Crozer, who is also the chairman of High Halstow Parish Council.

"We have been pushing for this for 13 or 14 years."

He said he was delighted the environmental importance of the Thames Estuary had been taken into account.

"For us it's a watershed," said. "The government has started to realise how environmentally important the north Kent marshes are.

"That's the one piece of recognition from government that really pleased us and is really why we are celebrating.

"We have always campaigned on environmental grounds. The Thames Estuary is an internationally protected site, but politicians have never really taken that on board, even though for us it's fundamental.

"We are starting to put this in the hearts and minds of the people of the nation."

He thanked Kent on Sunday for supporting the campaign against the airport and paid tribute to fellow campaigners, Joan Darwell and Gill Moore.

"They have been tireless in their dedication," Mr Crozer said.

Jubilation as report drives the final nail in the coffin of runway in middle of the Thames Estuary, reports Sarah Linney

"I must pay tribute to them, as well as the RSPB, Medway Council and Kent County Council.

"Kent on Sunday declaring its support was a real boost to us."

However, he said he thought it was too much to hope that the plans had been scrapped for good.

"Since 1947 the estuary has been considered a suitable place for an airport," Mr Crozer added.

"I can't see this coming back in the next Government, but the trouble is that people forget and if we've not expanded Gatwick or Heathrow, it will raise its head again in the foreseeable future – history says it will."

However, Rochester and Strood MP Mark Reckless was more optimistic.

"It is great news this has been ruled out once and, I think now, for all," he said.

"It would have completely destroyed the character of our area. And it would have been the most fabulous waste of more than £100bn, which we don't have, when we can expand an existing airport.

"Even Boris wouldn't seriously be able to bring it back now. There were several hundred pages of reports demonstrating to an overwhelming degree that it is unfeasible – pie in the sky."

Kent County Council and Medway

Council had been united in their opposition to the plans, with KCC leader Paul Carter saying that "common sense has prevailed".

He said: "The commission has confirmed what Kent County Council and Medway Council have always made the case for – that constructing a new airport in or around the Thames Estuary is completely undeliverable and would be environmentally and economically disastrous.

"The transport infrastructure alone, to get staff and passengers to and from a mega-hub airport on the east side of London, would have cost tens of billions of pounds and taken decades to deliver.

"The forced closure of Heathrow and its effective relocation from west London to the Thames Estuary would have caused irrevocable damage to not only the economy around Heathrow, but also to the UK economy as a whole."

Medway Council leader Rodney Chambers added: "We have said all along that this should never have even been considered.

"The cost to the taxpayer was never fully explained and it would have resulted in the mass destruction of habitat and wildlife that could never

KOS COMMENT:

KENT on Sunday has been an outspoken opponent of the Thames Estuary airport from the start. We believed that despite the economic boost it could deliver, the cost was always going to be too high.

Kent prides itself on its countryside and its rural backbone. To build an airport which would see so much of what we cherish destroyed, and the rest of it marred by the roar of jet engines, could not be justified.

What's more, Boris Johnson was clearly using the proposals for his own political capital – first to endear so much of west London to his bid to become mayor, and more recently in his bid to become an MP in Uxbridge.

He stands to gain either way. He will be the man who attempted the impossible – to move Heathrow. It will no doubt figure highly in his campaign. Only his ego will emerge a little tarnished.

But he was also cowardly in his approach to the plans. He refused to meet Kent or Medway council



top brass to discuss their concerns, and instead simply yelled his support from the heart of the capital.

Kent is not simply a grassy suburb of London, some sort of backwater happy to become an extension to London's transport issues.

We are a proud county, rich in history, rich in wildlife, rich in a sense of right and wrong.

The Thames Estuary airport proposal was wrong and misjudged. We should all feel relieved that what we hold most dear will remain unspoilt.

The destruction caused by the airport would, of course, have been felt much further afield than Medway.

Sittingbourne and Sheppey MP Gordon Henderson said it would possibly have had even more impact in his constituency, with the flightpath going right over Sheppey.

Mr Henderson said: "It would have destroyed forever the quality of life of people living in Sheppey and many people in Sittingbourne. We have recently seen an increase in flights over the area from Southend; the very thought of aircraft landing and taking off every minute doesn't bear thinking about."

And he said that even the extra jobs created by the airport would in fact have damaged the area.

"There would have been about 40,000 jobs created. We have 1,800 people unemployed, so the rest of the people are going to come from outside, which would have increased the traffic problems we have in our area and encouraged more housebuilding," he added.

"My constituents have seen some of the highest volume of housebuilding in Kent. We have done our bit and I don't think we should be doing any more."

Swale Borough Council leader Andrew Bowles described himself as "ecstatic".

"The infrastructure would have meant concreting over most of Medway and most of the Thames Gateway in Kent. We would have lost an awful lot of green space in Sheppey, Swale, Medway and Gravesham," he said.

"The scale is totally out of proportion to what we can accommodate sensibly. We can regenerate without totally destroying the countryside."

The fact that a decision had been made was also good from a business point of view, said Jo James, chief executive of the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce.

The chamber published a survey last week in which 41 per cent of its members chose the estuary airport as their preferred option for increasing the UK's aviation capacity.

Despite a higher proportion – 57 per cent – saying they preferred other options, the results were widely reported as meaning that Kent business leaders supported the idea of the estuary

airport – but Mrs James said this was the wrong way to interpret them.

"I don't think the full business case has really been outlined to the business community either way," she said.

"Just 29 per cent of our membership responded to the survey, so what were the views of the silent majority who chose to keep their views to themselves for whatever reason?"

She said she hoped a decision on

the expansion of either Heathrow or Gatwick would now be made as soon as possible.

"We need to look at this positively. The uncertainty has gone and we have to look at the opportunities that the expansion of Heathrow or Gatwick will bring, and how we can make them work for Kent businesses," Mrs James said.

"People are still looking at how

Manston can be resurrected and there is growing support among Kent businesses and the public sector within east Kent for getting it back up and running.

"The sooner a decision is made on which is the preferred option, the more accurately businesses can assess its impact. It is very difficult for businesses to plan with uncertainty,"

Neville Gaunt was part of the group

“ The uncertainty has gone and we have to look at the opportunities the expansion of Heathrow or Gatwick will bring, and how we can make them work ”

Jo James,

Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce

Demand Regeneration in North Kent (Drink) which campaigned for the airport not to be dismissed out of hand due to the business potential.

He said: "We never had proper debate and discussion. This is not a Kent decision, it is a national decision. We need to get away from the nimbyism and look at the long term future for the UK economy."

"If the UK is looking at being around in 2050, doing trade internationally, we need to have a better hub airport. Businesses are not going to fly to Manchester and then come to London."

"It's narrow minded. Turn the clock back a few years and the Channel Tunnel and HS1 were ridiculous, but look at the benefits it has brought to the south east. We are taking a short term view of a long term issue."

"I think it will come back on the table."

Campaigners had taken some heart from a report published by the commission earlier this summer which said the estuary airport would "radically and irreversibly" change the landscape.

"It is likely to result in large scale adverse effects on international nature conservation designations," the commission said.

"All the airport options proposed on the Hoo Peninsula would result in large scale habitat loss. A large area of compensation habitat creation would be required and this would be on a scale unprecedented for any single development in Europe."

A subsequent report by the British Trust for Ornithology said the airport would cause "a significant loss of coastal wetland habitat" – the area is home to more than 140,000 birds.

TIMELINE: THAMES ESTUARY AIRPORT

1971: The Roskill Commission, looking at options for what would have been a third London airport, rejects a proposal to build an airport at Maplin Sands, on reclaimed land to the east of Southend. The project is taken forward by the government despite the rejection, but cancelled in 1974.

2002: The government identifies Cliffe as its favourite site for a new, four-runway London airport.

2003: The government rejects the idea of a new airport at Cliffe due to the cost and the possibility that the airport might not be well used.

2008: Boris Johnson revives the idea of an airport in North Kent.

2011: New proposals for an airport on the Isle of Grain are put forward.

2013: Proposals for an airport on the Isle of Grain are submitted to the Airports Commission.

2014: JULY – The Commission publishes several reports stating that a Thames Estuary airport would involve enormous costs and environmental damage.

2014: SEPTEMBER – The proposals are rejected by the Airports Commission, but Boris Johnson says he will fight on.

DECISION IS A BLOW FOR BORIS...



THE Thames Estuary airport proposals had become known as Boris Island due to the London Mayor's unbending support for them.

Last week, Boris Johnson's office released figures suggesting that the airport would support 336,000 jobs around the country and contribute £92.1 billion a year to the economy by 2050.

In his report, Sir Howard Davies explained the reasoning behind the London Mayor's proposal – and why, ultimately, they were rejected.

"By replacing Heathrow, they remove the aviation noise nuisance from many people in west London," he says.

"To it are added other claims; that a new airport could allow 24-hour operations and reduce flying over central London; that it would be easily expandable as demand grows; and that it would catalyse a shift in the economic geography of the south east, providing impetus for the population of London to expand eastwards."

However, he added: "Perhaps surprisingly, in view of these promised benefits, the commission has found that few people outside the direct

advocacy groups support the idea.

"The aviation industry doubts the viability of the plan, local councils are opposed, and business groups are similarly unenthusiastic."

Undaunted, Mr Johnson said the decision was "myopic" and that he thought the proposals would be back on the table in the future.

"I remain convinced that a future government will return to plans for a hub airport on a site to the east of London," he said.

"The regeneration of east London and the Thames Gateway would transform the south east. In rejecting the possibility of a new airport, the commission has turned its back on the rapidly growing population of London, which desperately needs the homes and jobs that the estuary proposal offers."

"Gatwick is not a long term solution and an expansion of Heathrow would create unbelievable levels of noise, blight and pollution."

"A Thames Estuary airport remains the only credible solution. My team will continue to make the case for it, and I'm certain that it is the option that will eventually be chosen."



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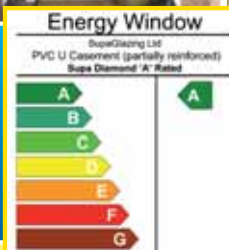
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TRIENNIAL ART: Will Kwan's Apparatus #9 is among the works featured around Folkestone

Lookout! How art is giving a golden boost to town's fortunes

Just like Margate before it, another seaside town is using art to help drive its regeneration. **Molly Kersey** takes a tour of the Folkestone Triennial to see the public works and discover its benefits...

IF YOU ever doubted the healing power of art, then look little further than the port town of Folkestone.

While the headlines of how artistic endeavour can become a catalyst for regeneration have been hogged by Margate in recent years – courtesy of the Turner Contemporary gallery – Folkestone is vying for equal billing.

And the sheer publicity value of the Folkestone Triennial reminds everyone of just what it can add to the bottom line of the local economy.

The triennial may be a once-every-three-years event, and runs for just two months, but as a quick glance in any of last weekend's broadsheets will tell you, it delivers acres of glorious publicity.

By the time you throw in a masterstroke such as artist Michael Stailstorfer's Folkestone Digs work – a living, evolving piece which involved burying £10,000 of small golden nuggets in the Outer Harbour Beach and telling people to come and get it – it almost becomes a case of not being able to buy the publicity and attention it achieves.

To whet the appetite further, there's the dis-

tinct possibility Yoko Ono – a woman's whose relationship with John Lennon elevated her to a global icon – will be in town at some point too.

She is the artist who catches the attention of even those who don't pretend to know anything about the world of art.

There are a selection of her works scattered around the town – all are likely to get tongues wagging in the way good art surely should.

This is the third triennial – a sprawling, ambitious, art programme which stretches its tentacles across the seaside town, highlighting its shifting fortunes, elegance and history.

This year's theme is under the title Lookout, a nod to the important role of Folkestone's history as a port, or, perhaps for a brighter future.

Key to that promised land has been the Creative Foundation. Established in 2002, it has been a key driver of the town's changes over the last decade, under the guiding influence of former Saga boss Roger de Haan.

Vastly wealthy – he sold the Saga business his father, Sidney, founded for £1.35billion in 2002 – it is his philanthropic approach which has

NTW

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been so prominent in Folkestone's evolution.

The Creative Quarter is perhaps the most visible alteration. The once down-at-heel Tontine Street is now part of a transformation of the lower high street area which leads down to the harbour.

Explains Alastair Upton, chief executive of the foundation: "We have about 90 buildings that have been restored and are used for a number of creative creations."

Whether letting space cheap for an artistic renaissance genuinely delivers an economic knock-on effect, only time will tell.

But the triennial is certainly part of that process.

Its curator is Lewis Biggs, former director of Tate Liverpool and visiting professor in contemporary art at Liverpool John Moores and Shanghai universities.

He has carefully selected artists whose work he believes fits in with the opportunity the triennial offers.

Their public art is spread throughout the town, with an estimated five hours of walking required to take all of them in.

The words 'Earth Peace' greet passengers making their way out of Folkestone Central train station.

The piece has a plain white background, giving prominence to the bold black letters it features.

This is the work of Ms Ono – a renowned and vocal peace activist. Unsurprisingly, it has dominated much of her acclaimed work.

Although not confirmed, she is due to pay a visit to Folkestone where she will view the recently unveiled memorial arch on the Road of Remembrance, and pay her respects to those who gave



Picture courtesy: THIERRY BAL

their lives in the First World War.

In recent months, it has also propelled the town into the headlines, as the point of departure for millions of Allied troops as they headed to the trenches and the killing fields of northern France and Belgium.

"It's a particularly poignant moment to raise the issue of peace because, of course, Folkestone has been remembering its part in the First World War, which was considerable," said Mr Biggs.

It is the beginning of a steady

stream of work which weaves its way throughout the town.

At the Central Station bridge, arts collective Strange Cargo has created 'The Luckiest Place on Earth', enlisting the help of local members of the community who explained their personal reasons regarding why they feel lucky. Activating the engagement of the local population is, all are agreed, as important as attracting the visitor.

Under the leadership of Brigitte Orasinski, the stone plinths on the

wall have now been occupied by coloured figurines who are holding gold-plated talismans, representing the symbols people believed to be luckiest.

"I had an operation on my heart when I was three and survived," reads the message on a plaque placed under one of the plinths.

"We work with people. We want to make art that actually people can see themselves in," said Ms Orasinski.

"This invited people to share their version of luck with us. We all under-

stand it in one way or another."

The Folkestone Triennial frequently addresses the issues of past and present with the work that is situated in many different areas in the town.

This is particularly true of the work of Jyll Bradley, whose sculptural light installation has been created for the Old Gasworks site on Foord Road North.

The site is now empty and redundant, but it was once a source of en-



CHALLENGING: Tim Etchells' Is Why the Place, 2014, and (above) artist, icon and pop culture legend Yoko Ono

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ergy and where electric light was first generated for the town.

Ms Bradley, who was born in the town in the same year the gas works were decommissioned, described the work as a "hybridisation of the old and the new".

"In a very personal way for me, it's kind of like a giant self portrait," she said.

"It was extraordinary to get the invitation from Lewis to come back to the town of my birth to create this piece."

The immersive and reflective installation has made use of traditional hop-stringing skills and created a web of colour and light at a spot that had previously been "a dark hole in the middle of the neighbourhood".

Amina Menia has also created a dialogue between the past and future with her installation in the Memorial Garden on Tontine Street, marking the place where 60 people lost their lives in an aerial bombing raid in 1917.

The installation features voice recordings of professional actor Peter Stern reading out recipes.

The site had previously been a bakery before it was hit by a bomb.

Other works address current anxieties and concerns, with hybrid design studio Rotoftwo creating Whithervanes 1-5, a Neurotic Early Worrying System (NEWS).

Co-directed by John Marshall and Cezanne Charles, the sculptures of five headless chickens have been located on the highest points of five buildings, that have been selected for both their height and

prominence for the community.

The 21st century weathervanes are designed to track and measure the production of fear on the internet, looking for predetermined related keywords such as natural disaster or war.

Their software searches the news-feeds from Reuters.

When fear is encountered, the sculptures respond by spinning at increasing speeds and illuminating different colours.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the chickens have not stayed still for very long. "You get these spikes during the day," said Mr Marshall.

"When you get the lunch time news and early evening news around the world, you get spikes."

People in Folkestone have the chance to influence what happens to the modern day weathervanes, and have been offered the opportunity to tweet to @whithervanes.

Ms Charles said: "We are encouraging people to tweet 'keep calm' or 'sky falling' depending on whether they want to increase or decrease the threat."

Opening up a discussion about a number of issues within society, and with each piece offering a unique and interesting story, the Folkestone Triennial does not lack variety in the art that it offers to people in the town.

Taking in the art work is an absorbing and fascinating experience. It may yet prove to be the vessel which leads the town into a prosperous future.

■ **The Folkestone Triennial 2014: Lookout runs until November 2 and admission is free. For more information on the event, see the website www.folkestonetriennial.org.uk.**

FOLKESTONE'S GOLDEN SANDS...



TREASURE hunters are continuing to dig for gold on a Folkestone beach after it was revealed that an artist had buried £10,000 worth of gold there.

Announced just hours before the tide swept out and revealed the beach and its hidden bounty, gold seekers flocked in their thousands to the Outer Harbour Beach.

With just a handful of the 30 pieces of 24-carat gold discovered so far, the crowds have kept coming.

One lucky couple, Kevin Wood and Kirsty Henderson, from Canterbury, are believed to be the first to find a bar, worth £500, on the beach.

The pieces, which range in value from £250 to

£500, are thought to be buried across the beach at a depth of around half a metre. The work has been commissioned by the Bristol-based arts producers Situations and is the work of artist Michael Sailstorfer.

"The art work is very much what now happens, how that rumour spreads, how you tell people, who comes down, who comes to visit Folkestone as a result," said Claire Doherty, director of Situations.

"It's also about what happens to the landscape. That landscape, the beach, will completely change for the duration of four to five hours, every time the tide goes out."

Anyone who finds a bar can keep it.

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Who will be next to leap upon Farage's Ukip bandwagon?

Sarah Linney takes a look at the latest twists and turns in the corridors of power and asks if we too may soon witness our local and national representatives switching political allegiance...

AFTER Essex MP Douglas Carswell announced, to much fanfare, he was quitting the Conservative Party and leaping into bed with Nigel Farage's Ukip, speculation has been rife as to who might be next.

And with Ukip now the official opposition to the Tories on Kent County Council, and the victors in the recent European elections across the south east, the rumour mill has been alive with suggestions of defectors from our county.

At least one Kent MP this week confirmed they had been approached by Ukip, while the county is only too used to politicians at grassroots level – local and county councils – swapping sides.

Much of the senior Ukip leaders on KCC have a Conservative background.

Of course, Ukip is only too aware that setting off a small ripple of gossip can create a major wave of uncertainty which threatens to crash not only upon the heads of the Conservatives, but even Labour too.

There is, after all, much political capital to be made from an apparent divide within the ranks.

Party leader Nigel Farage, from Westerham, who was confirmed last month as Ukip's candidate for the South Thanet seat at next year's Gen-

eral Election, typically refused to be drawn on the matter this week, telling Kent on Sunday that he had "nothing to say" and that he "spoke to people all the time on a raft of matters".

But Ukip treasurer Stuart Wheeler, who owns and lives in Chilham Castle, said he believed further defections were "more likely than not" and said he had discussed the possibility of defection with several MPs in secret over lunch.

However, Mr Wheeler refused to confirm whether any of the MPs were from true blue Kent, although he confirmed they were all Conservatives. He said most of the lunches had taken place in London.

"The lunches were all more than two years ago," Mr Wheeler told KoS.

"I invited about eight or ten MPs to have lunch with me, one at a time, in an out of the way restaurant. In all cases I approached the MP, rather than the other way around.

"I made a definite promise that I would not name any of the people so I couldn't say whether any of them are from Kent. I have not spoken to any Labour politicians, although there are some Eurosceptic Labour politicians."

The multi-millionaire, who made his fortune as the founder of the spread betting firm IG Index, was expelled from the Conservative Party in

2009 after donating £100,000 to Ukip.

"The MPs who spoke to me," explained Mr Wheeler, "did so for the same sort of reasons as I turned to Ukip. They think it's disastrous for us to be in the EU."

He added the Tory party should be "very worried".

A key landmark will be the Clacton by-election – the seat held by Douglas Carswell as a Tory, but which he will now compete for as a Ukip representative.

Should he win – effectively overturning his own considerable majority – it may give other disaffected Tories the confidence to follow suit.

"An opinion poll in the Mail on Sunday gave Carswell a colossal lead," added Mr Wheeler. "It may turn out to be a bit of an exaggeration, but it seems very unlikely that he won't win and I think he will probably win easily.

"And I think it will be a big influence on any Tories thinking they may defect. Until recently, if you defected you were very likely to lose your seat. It's a hell of a decision to make and Mr Carswell has taken a very brave step.

"I can't be confident of what will happen, but between now and the General Election I think we will see some defections... at least one. And if we see one or two, a trickle might turn into a stream."

Without exception, the Kent Tories we spoke to denied any prospect of defection – apart from one, who did not return our call.

Sittingbourne and Sheppey MP Gordon Henderson admitted Ukip had been in touch. He said: "I have been approached by Ukip, but any suggestion that I would defect is total nonsense," he said.

"I was born a Conservative and I will die a Conservative. I am far too old to transfer my allegiance.

"I leave the party politics to those who like party politics. I don't get involved in all the chit-chat that goes on. My focus is purely on helping my constituents."

Prominent Eurosceptic Mark Reckless – MP for Rochester and Strood – has gone on record as saying he would not defect. But as a friend of Mr Carswell, when we approached him, he manifestly did not want to discuss the issue at all.

"He is a personal friend and I don't want to attack or criticise him personally," Mr Reckless told Kent on Sunday.

"But David Cameron promised a referendum and I thought that was a very important promise."

Long-standing Tory and North Thanet MP Sir Roger Gale assured KoS he would "absolutely not" defect.

"Anyone who suggests otherwise is talking drivell," he said.

"I have always believed that politics is about democracy. If you can't win a battle through a vote then you have lost. But what you don't do is take your bat and ball away and sulk.

"I have always believed you fight your battles within the party. I can't imagine an issue over which I'd defect.

"I think the people who are petulant are no more than that. None of us has a monopoly of wisdom."

Mr Gale said he was "saddened" by Mr Carswell's defection and that he had made a "profound political mistake".

"People like Carswell and those who support him are living in a fools' paradise," Mr Gale added.

"They believe Ukip are going to deliver something they are not. The best they will deliver is a split vote and a Labour government, which will not deliver a referendum."

Another name being banded about is that of Euro MP Dan Hannan, a highly Eurosceptic Tory who has represented the south east – the European constituency which Kent is a part of – in the European Parliament since 1999.

He and Mr Carswell wrote a book together, *The Plan: Twelve Months to Renew Britain*, and he has stayed at Chilham Castle more than once. However, he blogged categorically just last month that he would not be joining Ukip.

But Sevenoaks councillor Chris Neal, who moved from the Tories to Ukip last Friday, said he knew his discontentment was shared by many former party colleagues.



PM: Tory leader David Cameron



MP: Tony Gordon Henderson



MP: Tory Mark Reckless



VIEWS: Ukip's Stuart Wheeler

"I know some people who are thinking of jumping ship," Mr Neal told KoS.

"I have had a number of conversations since Friday with Tories from Kent and further afield – councillors and one MP. I have had five conversations with Tories in Kent who are considering their position.

"It would be wrong of me to say they are going to leave but they are very sympathetic to my reasons.

"If Conservative headquarters don't take notice of this, I think they are going to find themselves in a very sticky situation when it comes to the election next year. This is happening with both main parties. The electorate are very disappointed."

■ **What do you think? Is it right for elected politicians to switch allegiance mid-term? Will other Tories in Kent swap sides? Join the debate and share your views. Write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN25 1PP. Or email us at editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.**

CLLR CHRIS NEAL... THE FIRST TO FOLLOW

CONSERVATIVE councillor Chris Neal became the first party member to follow Mr Carswell's lead when he announced he was leaving to join Ukip.

Mr Neal, who represents Cowden and Hever ward on Sevenoaks District Council, said it had been "a very, very hard decision".

And he said he felt terrible about taxpayers having to foot the bill for a by-election and that if they wanted one he would pay for it out of his own pocket.

"I have been a member of the Conservative Party since 1979," said the 55-year-old.

"It tests every fibre of your being when you think about loyalty. But at the end of the day, who am I being loyal to? The people who are running the Tory party no longer adhere to the old Tory ideologies; individual liberty coupled with personal responsibility, smaller government, free markets."

He said several policies had encouraged him to defect, including an affordable housing levy for developers introduced by the council, Kent County Council's support for the expansion of Gatwick airport, the introduction of same sex marriage and the lack of a free vote on the Hunting Act.

"In 2010, I was not thinking about defection in the slightest. I was totally smitten by the idea of the Big Society and a lot of what David Cameron was saying," Mr Neal recalled.


"I found so much hope and aspiration then, but I am just jaundiced by what I have seen. All we have really seen is policies of great efficacy just jettisoned.

"I think it's clear that Cameron is very pro-Europe – he would rather this referendum thing went away, and it was only under a lot of pressure that he announced we would have one.

"Ukip offer an alternative. They say things as they see them and they have an agenda of common sense, hope and aspiration which is attractive to people from across the political spectrum."

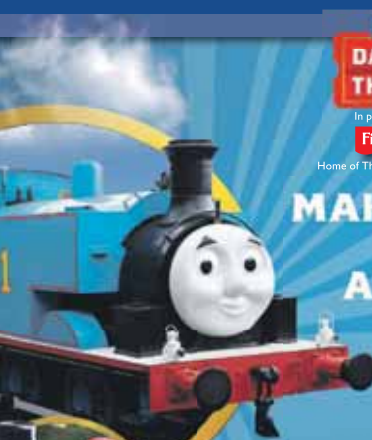
Mr Neal is standing down from the council in May but said that if his ward members demanded a by-election before then, because he had changed parties, he would pay for it himself.

"I am trying to do it in as honourable a way as possible," he added. "If my principles cause a by-election, it would be wrong to expect the taxpayers to pick up the bill. I will pay for it."



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UKIP PAST AND PRESENT...

NO Kent MPs are known to be thinking of changing parties – but lowlier politicians are another matter, according to Ukip's leader on Kent County Council.

Roger Latchford told KoS: "I am not aware of any MPs who are considering their position, but I am aware of a number of district councillors.

"I think David Cameron's leadership is now becoming an issue within the party – they realise their future is in jeopardy as a ruling party.

"Ukip working together with the Tories would be quite a good plan, but Nigel Farage has made it clear he won't work with David Cameron. But if the Tories were to look at a new leader, I am sure Mr Farage would consider any approaches for the benefit of the country."

A lifelong Conservative, Mr Latchford was the deputy Conservative leader on Thanet District Council until he left the party in 2011.

"I just couldn't stomach today's Conservatism – this metropolitan elite of politicians under David Cameron," he said.

"There were many issues. After about six months I was approached by Ukip and I found they really embraced the values I have for our country. The rest is history."

Tunbridge Wells district councillor Piers Wauchope, who is expected to be Ukip's prospective parliamentary candidate in North Thanet, had left the party even earlier, in 2006.



MP BID: Ukip's Piers Wauchope

"I left shortly after Cameron took over. It was clear to me then that we were going nowhere," he said.

"It was just the way the policies were going. It made one think 'what was the point of being a Conservative?'. It wasn't what I joined for. And since the Coalition that has been reinforced in spades.

"I know a lot of people in the Conservative Party who are privately very unhappy. The excuse is always the Coalition, but the truth is that we were going that way long before."

He said Cameron and other leading figures in the Tory party had shown "utter contempt".

"Throughout the Labour years, through the transfer of power to Europe and massive immigration, the Conservatives never went on the attack," Mr Wauchope said.

"It was clear they were never

going to do anything. I can't understand now why anyone would want to stay in the Conservative Party if they had any sort of views critical of Europe and mass immigration.

He said he had not spoken to anyone from another party about possible defections – but was hoping that they would ensue.

"These are very exciting times for us," Mr Wauchope said.

"We very much hope that following the Clacton by-election, the other Conservatives who are like-minded will see the success Mr Carswell has, and that will bring more across.

"No-one has spoken to me, but there are some very prominent Eurosceptics in Parliament and the European Parliament who we would hope to tempt across.

"Which of these people are



KCC: Ukip leader Roger Latchford



LEADER: Ukip's Nigel Farage

really happy inside a party led by David Cameron? That's the question they have to ask, as they appear to be without any influence at all within the Tory party."

Defections can, of course, go either way. South Thanet Conservative parliamentary candidate Craig Mackinlay defected from Ukip, where he had briefly been deputy leader, to the Tories in 2005.

"We [Ukip] had had two out of 11 MEPs imprisoned for fraud," Mr Mackinlay recalled.

"All parties have their goodies and baddies, but Ukip seemed to have accumulated more baddies quicker than most.

"And there was a new wind blowing through every Conservative association. All Conservative associations across Kent want a change to Britain's relationship with

the EU. So I thought; let's join a fully-fledged proper political party.

"The main reason was that Ukip is likely to let Labour in. You may not be completely happy with what the Tory hierarchy is doing, but if you have a Labour government you will not have a referendum and you will be further away from the things that are concerning you. Labour is the evil in this."

He said he was almost certain that no Kent Tories were planning to defect.

"I'd say I'm close to 100 per cent confident it's not going to happen. I know all of them well," Mr Mackinlay said.

"When you have a referendum so close, it makes no sense. To anyone who's even thinking about it, I'd say: don't do it. The only people who will be toasting you will be Ed Miliband and Ed Balls."



MP BID: Tory Craig Mackinlay

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Competition

Win family tickets to Leeds Castle Flower Festival

ONE of the county's most popular, and beautiful, tourist attractions will explode in a colourful display of floral treats later this month.

The Festival of Flowers takes place at Leeds Castle, near Maidstone, from September 23-28.

And, thanks to this newspaper, you can be there for free.

We have five sets of family day tickets up for grabs, with each winner winning a pass which will grant access for two adults and up to three children.

Themed 'Autumn Glory' Leeds Castle head florist, Louise Roots, and multi-award winning floral designer Mig Kimpton will lead a team of over 25 designers to transform the castle rooms through floral works of art on display.

Specialist talks, demonstrations and workshops make for a truly floral celebration for visitors to enjoy throughout the week.

Children can join in the festival fun with a floral themed 'I Spy' trail while visitors of all ages will enjoy the Woodland Walk. Both activities are included in price of admission.

A Floral Art Competition sponsored



by South East Flowers will feature three classes entered by florists, flower arrangers, student florists or simply those that enjoy working with flowers for visitors to judge their favourite designs.

There will also be specialist workshops and demonstrations in the Festival Floral Marquee on the Pavilion Lawn.

To be in with a chance of winning

one of the family tickets, simply answer the following question:

■ Leeds Castle is closest to which Kent town?

- a) Margate
- b) Maidstone
- c) Sevenoaks

To enter text KOS followed by FLOWER and your answer then your first name, surname address and postcode to 80058, eg. KOS FLOWER C JOHN SMITH 2 THE STREET, TOWN, DV2 2GT. Texts cost 50p plus your standard network rate.

Winners will be selected from all correct entries. The promoter's decision is final. Usual terms and conditions apply and can be found on our website www.kentnews.co.uk. Please note if you should enter after the closing deadline of Wednesday September 16, 2014, your entry will not be valid, but you still may be charged. SMS services are provided by BBA Digital: Helpline telephone 0844 3572403. Alternatively, enter by post to Leeds Castle Flower Festival Competition, Archant KOS Media, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PP including your answer, name, address, postcode and contact telephone number.



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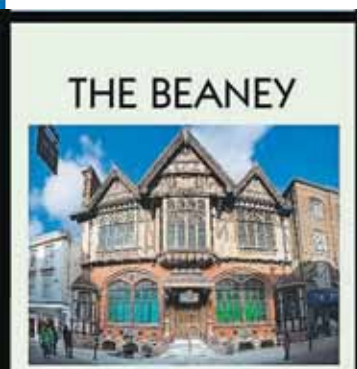
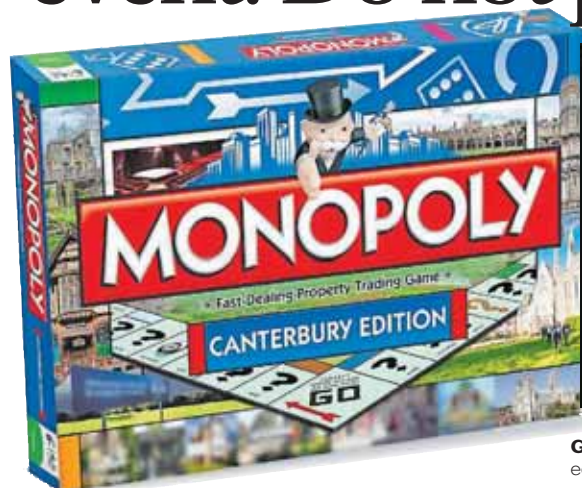
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GAMES FUN: City won vote to have its own edition of the ever-popular board game



By Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

A VERSION of the ever-popular board game Monopoly, based on and around Canterbury, will be on the shelves in time for Christmas it has been confirmed.

The cathedral city was one of a number of towns in the county given the chance to have a special version of the wheeling and dealing board game.

More than 7,500 voted, with Canterbury emerging triumphant, beating Tunbridge Wells into second place, ahead of the likes of Maidstone and Dover.

After being selected, those living in the district were then given the option to nominate popular landmarks and streets to feature on the famous board.

Robert Osborne, Monopoly manager at the board's maker, Winning Moves UK, said: "More than 2,000 landmarks, streets or roads could po-

tentially have appeared on the board.

"Realistically around 200 were in the running so many congratulations to the 20 or so which have made it onto the board. And most importantly a very big thank you to everyone who voted."

Now the launch day has been confirmed as October 10 – with a special event taking place in the Beaney Art Museum and Library in the city centre.

The official Monopoly board for Canterbury will be unveiled in what organisers describe as "spectacular

style", at exactly the same time as the board goes on shop shelves.

It will be then it is revealed which local spot will be top property 'Mayfair' on the board, as well as all other 21 sites. Even the Chance and Community Chest cards have been customised.

Canterbury tourism's head of marketing, James Williams, said: "It's going to be exciting to find out which city landmarks appear on this unique Monopoly board."

The public is invited to attend the

event, which starts at 10am, with one child offered the chance of opening, playing and keeping the first official board off the production line.

To be in with a chance of being the child picked to win and play the first ever board on the launch day, email vip@6starpr.co.uk answering the question 'Why I should be a Monopoly VIP?'. The best poem, ditty or verse will win.

Anyone under 16, and who lives in Canterbury, can enter. Entries must be received by October 1.

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Home-grown talent key to future

Ed Martin, manager of Produced in Kent, an organisation set up to champion local food and drink producers, explains why a little can go a long way in terms of supporting those in our rural economy



IT WAS Bill Clinton who, when running for the job of president of the USA, stuck a note on his desk to remind him how to win: it said: 'The economy – stupid!'.

The point was he would get votes if he had policies for a strong economy.

As we begin the run up to next year's General Election, it will be interesting to see what policies our own politicians put forward in support of the economy in Kent – especially the rural economy.

Kent is quintessentially a rural county. While some 30 per cent of the population (close to 500,000 people) live in rural communities, 85 per cent of the land is classed as rural.

It is from this that comes the county's long-term future and with it the

potential to create many jobs.

After all, the soil will always be here no matter what relocation policies big companies may have and tax incentives come and go.

Kent is a leader in many agricultural techniques and has consistently shown how to improve yields and maintain quality; skills and knowledge the world desperately needs.

But it also faces many challenges, not least how to adapt to a changing climate in the face of a growing population, a demand for more houses and an uncertain future in Europe.

But then, as the old saying has it, every cloud has a silver lining.

As incomes are rising in other parts of the world (if sadly not in our own) then there are more consumers seek-

ing to buy better goods and services.

And Kent has plenty of these to offer. Our speciality food and drink producers and growers are first class. The standards are high and the world is hungry for our excellent produce.

From sparkling wine to soft fruit, from home-grown beef to best quality cheeses, the county continues to surprise with the range and quality of its small and medium-sized food producers.

And the Government is keen we should not only produce more but also export more.

It is the home market that can really play a big role in helping the Kent economy.

Whatever policies our politicians come up with, we all have to buy food

every week – if not every day.

If we all just spent a mere 10 per cent of our monthly food budget with local producers, growers and suppliers, we can contribute millions of pounds to our own economy.

Surely Kent, the Garden of England, should be aspiring to feed its own people, especially its children, its sick and its vulnerable citizens?

This has the ability to make a real and lasting contribution to our future in this county, one in which all of us, young and old, can play a positive part – and be proud of it.

So look out for the Produced in Kent '10 per cent Kent' campaign and join in and help shape our own delicious and home-grown economic policy for Kent.





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Hop festival pulls in the crowds with its brew of family fun

Faversham celebrated its beer-based heritage with a family-friendly mix of music, dance, ales and big crowds. **Chris Britcher** reports...

ORGANISERS of this year's Faversham Hop Festival have hailed the event a success, after more than 30,000 descended on the town last weekend.

Crowds enjoyed music, dancing and a wide variety of ales at the event which celebrates the town's hop heritage.

A strong police presence was on hand, working in conjunction with security staff, to ensure any potential trouble was snuffed out.

A man was arrested in East Street on Saturday afternoon following an assault on ambulance personnel but the incident is not believed to be drink related.

Three people were treated by paramedics during the two-day festival – one of which was a woman who was taken to hospital following an allergic reaction to seafood.

Earlier in the year, the festival date had to be brought forward a week after it was discovered Network Rail would be carrying out track maintenance on September 6 and 7.

Festival managing director David Thompson said: "I'm highly delighted with the way the festival went. Despite the change of date the festival was still fantastic.

"We have had positive feedback from traders, councillors and local people."

He added: "I would like to thank all the volunteers who gave their time to ensure the festival's success.

"Event management provided a safe, comfortable environment for residents and visitors alike. I would also like to thank the police whose supportive attitude added to our success.

"This is my first year in charge of the festival and I just couldn't be happier."

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Awards ceremony pays fitting tribute to the county's courageous firefighters

From bravery under extreme conditions to 'invaluable' help while off-duty, Kent Fire and Rescue Service staff received honours for their outstanding work and heroism on the job. **Jamie Weir** reports

HEROES from the county's fire service were honoured at an awards ceremony this week.

The special gathering celebrated tales of heroism from Kent Fire and Rescue Service's (KFRS) frontline and support staff.

Among those to receive a special commendation was Sheppey firefighter Ronnie Selfe.

Despite being off-duty, he was first on the scene at a crash on the A249 earlier this year which claimed the life of a woman and her eight-year-old son on the Sheppey Crossing.

The audience was told how he acted instinctively, taking control of the scene until the emergency services arrived.

Mr Selfe was described by a paramedic who was at the crash, as having been "invaluable" to the efforts

with his help and received a special certificate of commendation.

KFRS chief executive, Ann Millington, said: "This devastating incident is something we all hope never to have to face. Our thoughts remain with the families of those involved."

Ms Millington, alongside the Lord Lieutenant for Kent, the Viscount De L'Isle, and the chairman of Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority, Nick Chard, presented the awards on Wednesday at a ceremony at Oakwood House in Maidstone.

She said: "I am delighted to recognise the achievements of our members of staff. All those receiving the awards have exemplified the very best of KFRS."

"I am extremely proud of all those receiving awards and would like to express my thanks, not just to them, but also to all the staff at KFRS for



HEIGHT OF BRAVERY: The Kent Fire and Rescue Service awards ceremony was at Oakwood House in Maidstone

their dedication and hard work for Kent and Medway's communities."

Many of the outstanding achievements of the staff involved saving lives.

The crew members of Sheppey fire station's Red Watch received a certificate of congratulations for their brav-

ery under difficult circumstances at a house fire in Sheerness.

They had arrived at the scene in Strode Crescent to find an elderly man trapped in a mid-terraced property, while a particularly fierce blaze raged around him.

But, against the odds, the crew fought the blaze and managed to battle to quell it enough so that they could save the man's life.

The team, made up of crew manager

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RECOGNITION: Left to right KFRS chairman Nick Chard, Jim Ashby, Paul Ross, Steve Smart, Steve Uggles and KFRS chief executive Ann Millington; and the firefighting Sheppey crew

« PAGE 27

Jim Ashby and firefighters Steve Uggles, Steve Smart and Paul Ross, were commended for their quick and courageous actions, which, it was said, prevented the incident from worsening and undoubtedly saved the man's life.

Other commendations were to Chris Mettham and Lee Orton, from the Margate fire team.

They were congratulated for 'outstanding professionalism' in attending a fire at a pub which saw a woman and her two dogs rescued.

Jason Reeves, a firefighter in Maidstone, won an award for providing vital CPR which saved a man's life following a road crash on the A21.

Other awards went to technical rescue team dog handler and Ramsgate Watch manager Dave Hudson and the rescue dogs, Meg and Murphy, who are retiring from the roles after dedicated service responding to incidents at home and abroad.

Husband and wife fire-fighting team Angie and Dave Hester were also recognised for their outstanding commitment and service as on-call firefighters and co-responders, helping those with medical emergencies in the local area.

The awards ceremony also congratulated those who have served with KFRS for long periods of time.

The long service and good conduct medal is only awarded to those who

have served with KFRS for over 20 years. But the bar to receiving one of

“ All those have shown outstanding commitment to the fire and rescue service and also to the people of Kent and Medway. They deserve our respect ”

Ann Millington, Kent Fire and Rescue Service chief executive

these prestigious awards is set even higher, with recipients needing an exemplary record and a personal recommendation for the award from the KFRS chief executive.

One of the few who received the award this year was crew manager Brian Millbank.

He first joined KFRS in October, 1993, at the Larkfield station. He stayed there until 2010, when he transferred to Borough Green, where he and his family live.

As is to be expected after over 20 years in service, Mr Millbank has been involved in many incidents.

One of the biggest fires he ever fought was at a furniture store in Maidstone in 1994. It was said at the

time that the fire was so intense that firefighters' helmets were melting because of the heat.

Mr Millbank was also in charge of the job which saw two Borough Green firefighters receive certificates of congratulation in 2012, after they saved the life of a lorry driver who suffered a heart attack following a lorry fire on the M20.

Ms Millington said of Mr Millbank, and the others who received the award: "All those receiving this award have shown outstanding commitment to the fire and rescue service and also to the people of Kent and Medway."

"They deserve our respect and gratitude for all they have done over the past 20 years."



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TUNEFUL: Choir member Alex Lister (top left), the Caritas singing group (top centre and bottom left) and choirmaster-turned- broadcaster Gareth Malone (above) who helped popularise choirs

Chorus of approval for county's many singers and their leaders

Choral singing: Everyone can do it and its good for you too. **Maria Chiorando** makes some notes...

WHEN choir singing saw its popularity explode, many hailed choral director Gareth Malone as its new saviour.

Mr Malone became a household name after TV shows in which he travelled to deprived areas, and troubled schools, bringing people together through the unifying power of music.

The choirmaster-turned-broadcaster's inclusive attitude seemed to kick-start a community singing revolution, inspiring hundreds of choirs to pop up around the country.

But Kent is certainly no stranger to the delights of choral singing, with a rich and melodic history of classical offerings.

So has the so-called 'Malone-effect' provided the county with a significant boost?

Former Canterbury Cathedral chorister Alex Lister believes the TV star's influence is perhaps not as strong as people would have you believe.

He explained: "Gareth Malone's choral antics have certainly helped the cause of singing.

"Although I have never met anyone who has joined a choir because they have seen Gareth Malone on TV, he has got a following and his programmes have meant that choir singing has seeped into the national collective consciousness."

He adds: "There is a weird feeling about Gareth Malone – he has got lots of people to sing, which is a good thing, but lots of choir directors don't really like him, because they think he's too 'pop' or they disagree with the way he does things."

A CARITAS CHOIR REHEARSAL

I'VE just been offered singing lessons by Benedict Preece.

I tell him I can't sing.

"I don't believe in talent," he says, "I believe in hard work, and if you can't do it that means that you're not working hard enough."

"People often think that they can't sing, but really, they haven't tried. You wouldn't assume you'd be able to get into a car and drive it without any lessons, and it's the same with singing."

"I firmly believe that if you can

speaking, you can sing, and it's just a case of persevering with it."

There's a good buzz in the rehearsal room, everyone's friendly but ready to work, clearly very much respectful of their youthful leader.

He's confident as he guides the group through a series of pieces, giving clear directions.

It's fascinating to watch the tweaks build the music into more solid, comprehensive pieces.

"I think directing is largely

about two things," says Mr Preece.

"Firstly you're trying to inspire people. Secondly, you get more out of people by making them enjoy the process – and they do have to trust you."

"Over the last couple of years, my approach has changed a bit. That's largely to do with growing up – as you get older you realise that there's more than one way to do things."

"The most convincing way – that's the way to sing it."

Benedict Preece, a Canterbury-based choir director, has been doing significant choral work across the county.

"I don't come from a musical background," he says. "My mother took me to a voice trial at the cathedral when I was young, and I became a chorister. I don't think she knew what she was letting herself in for."

Described as the 'enfant terrible' of the Kent choir scene, the 26-year-old is currently heading up two choirs that he founded: the East Bridge Choral Community Choir, formed in 2009 which is open to everyone, and Caritas Chamber Choir, which is entry by audition only. Both recruit from a pool of keen amateurs.

He is quick to point out the differences between the music Mr Malone is popularising, and the music he works with.

"I'm not sure it would be right to

say Malone's had any impact on classical singing in the county," Mr Preece explains, "as he's more about promoting rock singing."

"I don't want people to think I'm a musical snob, I understand that while rock music does nothing for me, for billions, it does, and that is the key thing; music should be about enjoyment, people shouldn't feel they have to sing classical music."

"I think the problem can be that people are sometimes intimidated by classical, it's not always as accessible as it could be."

Despite touting this classical repertoire that some may see as inaccessible, the director is gathering quite a following.

Chorister Alex Linney explains: "I think the thing Benedict has done that has been really impressive is getting a group of really strong singers

together, which is a very difficult thing to do."

"People who are really good and have all the technical skills will often already be singing with a choir, and perhaps getting paid for it. It is a critical mass; once you have good singers, more good singers want to join, but no-one wants to be the first."

Mr Preece combines directing with his other passion – refereeing rugby matches.

"It might seem like two very different things," he says, "But they are actually very similar – the psychology of it; how you manage people is the same whether you're on the rugby pitch or in the rehearsal room."

"A lot of it is about the way you communicate with people, and having that presence."

"I am well-used to dealing with controversies on the pitch."

The health benefits of group singing are becoming more and more well-documented.

Mr Preece says: "East Bridge tends to attract lots of older members, many of whom have remarked on how useful the breathing exercises are, and there are also benefits for those dealing with depression too."

His other project, another singing group called Caritas, established in 2011, has taken on members from East Bridge, and there is a strong link between the two groups.

"Caritas is Latin for charity," he explains, "and that is an important aspect of it – we have done concerts in various places, old churches and so on, where the proceeds have gone towards the venue."

Performances have raised money for other charities too, with more than £2,000 raised for the Stroke Association.

Charity aside, it is a fulfilling and popular pastime.

Mr Lister says: "You don't have to be an accomplished singer to join a choral society. Reading music looks really difficult, but on a very basic level, when the notes are higher in the lines, your voice needs to go higher, and vice versa with lower notes."

"Choral singing is extremely accessible, and anyone can give it a go."

And what does the future hold for Mr Preece?

"More of the same, I hope, I'm really keen to do more orchestral conducting and continue to plan concerts for charities through east Kent with Caritas."

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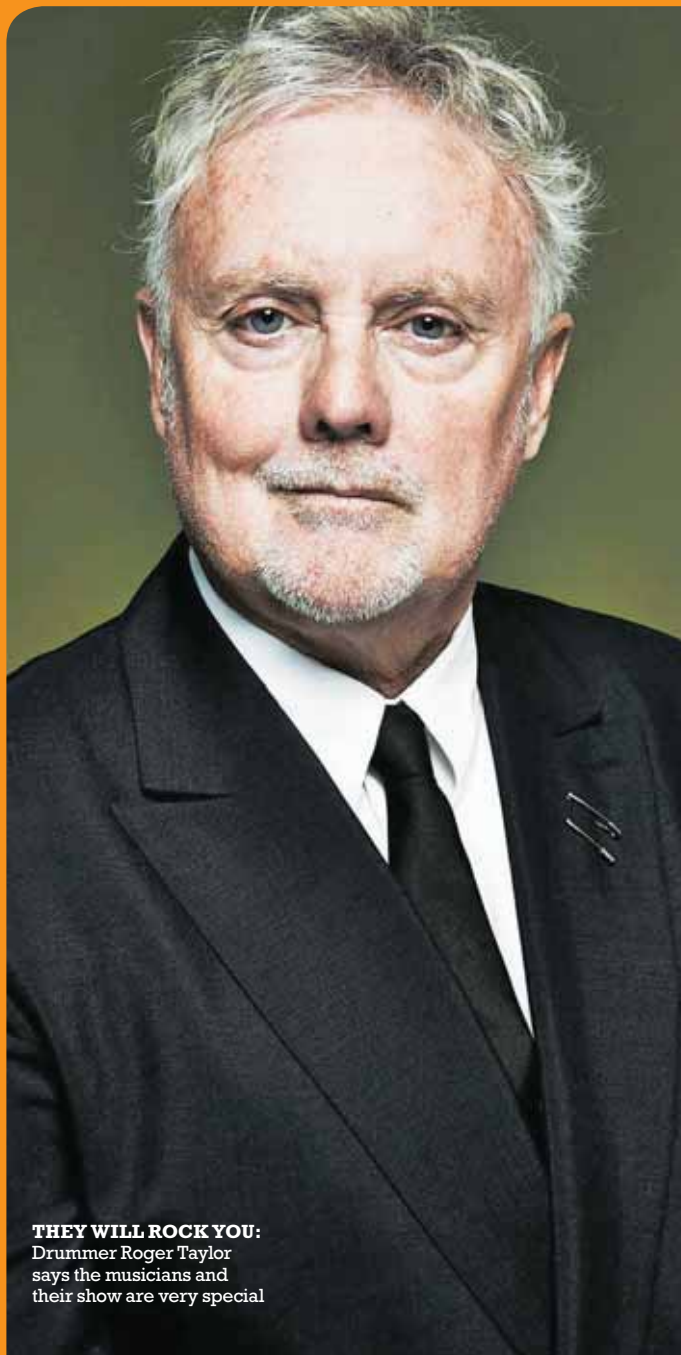
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THEY WILL ROCK YOU:
Drummer Roger Taylor
says the musicians and
their show are very special



The Queen Extravaganza will rock you, says Roger

Legendary rocker tells **Jamie Weir** about what fans at Tunbridge Wells Assembly Hall Theatre can expect to see...

ROGER Taylor, the blond-haired drummer who has kept the beat for legendary band Queen since its formation in the 1970s, is late for our arranged phone interview about the new Queen tribute band which he helped form. Apologising profusely, Taylor explains he was delayed after the sound check for the latest incarnation of the band – minus both the late Freddie Mercury and bassist John Deacon – overran.

Queen are on their first tour of Australia for more than 30 years. Only Taylor and guitarist Brian May remain from the original line-up, with vocalist Adam Lambert standing in for the inimitable Mercury. "It's great to be here, back in front of the crowds," Taylor explains on the phone. "I'm really looking forward to the shows out here. I'm a musician first and foremost and I've got such passion to perform, so it's great to be here doing it for the fans."

Queen-lovers unable to make the trip Down Under can settle for the next best thing – a tribute band created and guided by Messers Taylor and May. And on Tuesday it rolls into Tunbridge Wells's Assembly Hall Theatre. Taylor told KoS: "The Queen Extravaganza is our very own official Queen tribute band, put together by Brian and I. "We started a huge online

Continued on page 33 »

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FEMALE seeking male for adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413809

68YR old widow, seeking company of a male, 68-75 for friendship, likes cinema, theatre, nights in, meals out, seaside walks. Wants someone to help me love again. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413689

MAUREEN, discreet sensual lady, 42yrs seeks daytime fun at her home. ACA, Tel No: 0905 002 1961 Box No: 405297

BBW 51, caring, solvent, seeks male of similar age for fun times and socialising. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413621

SALLY, 36yrs, married but husband works away seeks discreet gent any age for fun only. Text only Box: 4492484

FEMALE 38, attractive, African, single mum, seeks male, 35-50 for nights out, socialising, friendship and fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412793

ANNA, busty mature lady seeks no strings discreet meetings with male any age or location. Tel No: 0905 002 1956 Box No: 366019

PETITE slim blonde 39yrs, pretty big blue eyes, looking for similar easygoing older male to put a spark back into my life, enjoy nights in/out and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412327

PHILLY, 20yrs, just left college, seeks older man for daytime fun, must be discreet as she has strict parents. Text only Box: 4492485

WIDOW 70, lonely, seeking gent, 70-75 to bring a bit of sparkle back in life, likes theatre, cinema. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412475

CHRISTINA, curvy beauty, 27yrs, own home, very very adventurous seeks no strings fun and frolics. Can accommodate and will answer all calls. Tel No: 0905 002 1957 Box No: 410127

LINDY, 43yrs young, married with husband away. Seeks discreet gent any age/area for no strings. Box 4459439 Text only

KATIE 26yr old pretty slim blue eyed blonde looking for evening entertainment with open-minded discreet guy, any age. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412319

JENNI, sensual lady, 23yrs seeks mature experienced man for no strings, daytime fun. Box 4459440 Text only

JANE 29yr old horsey female, loves the outdoors, cycling, as well as duvet days. WILTM not too serious male for a hopefully normal relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412315

GILLY, voluptuous well groomed lady, seeks man to massage and pamper. Married exciting men please apply. Tel No: 0905 002 1933 Box No: 412933

MARY 5ft 6in size 12 blonde, nice personality, good conversationalist, interesting, lots of interests WILTM likeminded caring, happy male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412169

CLARE 36yrs successful single mum, independent, employed with OHAC, size 10, green eyes, pretty, likes swimming, family life, seeking male with similar values and interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412053

ANN, young looking 40yrs seeks broadminded man of any age/location for no strings discreet times, games and more. ACA, Tel No: 0905 002 1937 Box No: 412369

LINDA 37, green eyes, attractive, bubbly size 12, enjoys cosy nights in, text chats, seeking tallish fun guy for meals out, pubs, clubs and spending quality times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411033

JOULIE attractive outgoing female with a very young attitude, loves running, living life, travel, WILTM someone special to make my life complete, hope you're out there. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411513

SARAH 25 petite slim attractive blonde student, enjoys keeping fit, looking good, socialising, going out, being a mum WILTM similar fun genuine guy. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411537

WIDOW late 60's, enjoy most things in life, looking for someone to enjoy them with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411395

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FREYA 33 6ft blonde, loves dancing and have a good time, employed, own home, one son, seeking similar laidback guy/dad for dates, chats and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412045

MARILYN really nice curvy tactile female, loves romantic walks, cosy nights in, quality times, looking for nice male to spend time and fall in love with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411871

JAN 5ft 6ins, dark hair/eyes, nice smile, likes music, travel, countryside, animals, employed, OHAC, looking for companionship with similar lonely heart. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411865

SUE optimistic divorced lady with OHAC, good job, enjoys meals out, cinema, countryside, pub lunches, looking for likeminded outgoing happy male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410467

CATHY very much a lady seeks gent up to 62yrs who would appreciate an independent professional sassy female who loves to be wined, dined and romanced. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410301

WOULD you like to bounce into spring with me and onwards? Widow late 60's, enjoy most things in life, looking for someone to enjoy them with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411395

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MARIE 37yrs slim attractive caring, likes meals in/out, cinema, tennis, keeping fit/ active, WILTM fun loving, reliable man for friendship leading to more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411037

RACHAEL 36yr old nurse looking to raise the temperature of reliable sincere male. I have my OACH, a single mum to 1, love gym, cosy meals, animals etc. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411045

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LADY 60, size 12, easy going, likes animals, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411301

SUSAN seeking nice male, medium build, 35, easygoing, likes music, nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406779

SOPHIE 27yr old nursing assistant with no ties looking for discreet adult fun times with tall attractive guy 35-42yrs, GSOH essential. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410717

34YR single mum of 1 who loves nights out having a good time seeks similar sociable fun guy to enjoy relaxed but extremely fun relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410709

BUSTY Caribbean lady who loves music, dance and singing, looking for nice older guy for mutual adult no strings fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410305

SUSAN 29 green eyes, dark hair, slim, looking for Mr tall dark and handsome to take me out, enjoy adult times without complications just fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410957

DEREK seeking female, 50-60 for company, friendship and have fun together. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411433

MALE 49, attractive, fit, spontaneous, good company, no ties, seeking likeminded lady for the road ahead, nights in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411309

RAY 63, 5ft 10ins, slim, semi-retired, seeking no strings discreet meets for adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411477

WORLD war veteran seeking happy lady with nice conversation in the Kent area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411133

PAUL own business, looking for daytime fun with lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411227

DAVE 65, retired, N/S, likes gardening, music, meals out, holidays, seeks female. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410971

DAVE 62, 5ft 10ins, slim, semi-retired builder, seeks no strings discreet daytime meets for adult fun. Surrey. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410899

MALE seeks outdoor life, smoker, seeking local female for cosy nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410755

BRIAN 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out and cosy nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611

EARLY 50's single male, smoker, seeking likeminded female for company and to share life. Must have GSOH, like animals, walks, home made food and nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410441

ADAM 48, single dad, bored, seeking fun and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408421

MALE seeking friendship of mature woman, smoker. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412703

SINGLE young lady, slim-medium build, 24-38 sought by mature male in Canterbury. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697

MALE 48, looking for fun loving female to enjoy outdoor activities, nights in and meals out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392212

DEREK 5ft 11ins, slim-medium build, loving, caring, seeking black lady for possible relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410511

MALE 49, 5ft 10ins, likes cinema, reading, walks, seeks female in the Thanet area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412235

MALE 49, 5ft 10ins, likes cinema, reading, walks, seeks female in the Thanet area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412235

EX headmaster, tall, dark, seeks adventurous lady, status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412263

MALE 49, 5ft 10ins, likes cinema, reading, walks, seeks female in the Thanet area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412235

BESIDE the Pointe, Litterate self-possessing, leggy, kindred spirit sought by white male for elevating the bar. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412223

45YR old male, likes poetry, seeks companion for relationship. Herne Bay area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411993

CHIPS on the pier, walks on the beach/countryside, VGSOH, 58yrs old, fit male, seeks female for laughs and love and whatever. NE Kent. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411725

MALE 5ft 11ins, good-looking, athletic build, looking for discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411477

DEREK</

« Continued from page 31

audition process to find band members, inviting musicians to enter by recording and uploading their music to the internet for us to look at. We found some truly incredible musicians through the process.

"Marc Martel, the man we took on as the lead singer, has had eight million views of his online audition tape. That's incredible for any musician and shows just how much raw talent he has.

"The band actually plays the music better than we ever did. Or, maybe 'better' isn't the right word.

“The show in Tunbridge Wells really is going to be something special and I'm incredibly proud of the guys”

"But they play a more perfect version, with a more polished sound, whereas we always used to go off and play around with the music when we were in concert."

And, says Taylor, the lead singer sounds almost exactly like original frontman Mercury.

He explains: "Marc sounds so like Freddie it's scary. When we started our search for band members, no one set out trying to find an impersonator and I certainly wasn't looking for a clone of Freddie.

"It just so happened this young man was immensely talented.

"But don't get me wrong, these guys are not impersonators. They are

incredible gifted musicians in their own right and certainly aren't just dressing up in costumes and pretending to be Queen.

"The Queen Extravaganza is specially designed to enable new fans, together with fans of old, to celebrate the music of Queen.

"It's very spectacular, it's very visual – there are going to be some shocks and some tremendous surprises. It will be a rock celebration in the royal tradition."

The 90-minute show will feature classic Queen hits, with crowd-pleasers like Bohemian Rhapsody, Another One Bites The Dust, Radio Ga Ga and We Will Rock You.

Taylor told KoS it wasn't simple choosing which songs to play as the band had such an extensive back catalogue.

He said: "It was incredibly difficult choosing, but what we've tried to do is pare it down so it is just the best which get played.

"We decided it would be good to include a few songs which people don't know so well and some of our older work, although, saying that, we also got a lot of songs which people can sing along to, so it's a really great mix.

"The show in Tunbridge Wells really is going to be something special and I'm incredibly proud of the guys.

"It's going to be a stunning night out for anyone who goes."

■ The Queen Extravaganza takes place on September 9. Tickets cost £22.50-£24.50. For details, call 01892 530613 or visit www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk.



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A STAR IS BORN: Suzanne Shaw has vivid Orchard Theatre memories!

Musical stars Paul ahead to Dartford

DARTFORD is not the first place you think of when the conversation turns to world premieres, but so it is with Blockbuster The Musical, which opens for the first time anywhere at The Orchard Theatre.

The show explores the themes of friendship and love and centres on Mickey Block, a talented young busker singing in London's Soho who is transported back to 1975 via Crazy Max's Retro Record Shop.

Max is played by Paul Nicholas, a man still best known for his role in the 1980s as Vince Pinner in Just Good Friends but who has enjoyed an extraordinarily rich career in the stage and musical world.

And 'enjoyed' is the word, his delight with the environment that he inhabits being joyfully evident when you speak with him.

"I've always worked hard over the years and love the acting world. I'm interested in all aspects of it, such as producing and directing, as well as the acting, of course.

"It's always good to get the opportunity to do something new – I

New show is making its debut at The Orchard. **David Mairs** talks with two of its stars and learns how the venue is a very special place for one of them...

like the challenge."

It's likely that the breadth of his acting career will not be known by many of those who will be coming to see him at The Orchard, so how does this man, perhaps the ultimate definition of the housewives'

“I'm think I'm still widely thought of in a nice way – it helps that UK Gold still runs Just Good Friends”

favourite, find modern audiences respond to him?

"When you're not being broadcast into people's homes any more, you need to still be recognised if you're hoping to help pull in audiences for

productions like this.

"I'm think I'm still widely thought of in a nice way – it helps that UK Gold still keeps running Just Good Friends."

The music that will really bring Blockbuster to life comes from the quills of Mike Chapman and Nicky Chinn, the song-writing duo who dominated the pop world in the 1970s and 80s with hits such as Tiger Feet, Can The Can, Mickey and Living Next Door To Alice.

It is sometimes suggested that such concerns as plot or storyline are largely incidental in musicals – it is really the songs that make or break a show. How does Nicholas view such an approach?

"To some extent that can be true," he said.

"Jukebox shows, they call them. But here all the songs are written by

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and Suzanne look world premiere

the same people, so there's a relative core to it. What's great is that they still sound terribly contemporary – I don't know why, but they do.

"Yes, you can do without a great plot or good story, but there's a nice balance with this.

"There's a reason for all the songs – they're not just shoved in."

Nicholas knows The Orchard: "It's near London, which is great, and it's an opportunity to start something somewhere other than Manchester. It's a good size for the show."

He also has a broader knowledge of Kent, most notably the Isle of Sheppey.

"I had a grandfather who lived in Sheerness and we used to go there for our annual holiday. We'd get the coach down from Victoria and I'd be terribly concerned that it didn't have a toilet."

And, once such issues were behind him, what treats awaited him?

"I remember the donkeys... and the docks. And going round the wreck in the harbour."

If Nicholas is familiar with the charms of The Orchard Theatre, it is likely that Blockbuster co-star

Suzanne Shaw (she plays Carol, who befriends Mickey) has yet stronger memories of the venue... she went into labour there while partner Darren Day was playing Buttons in Cinderella.

"I was taken into the dressing room and then to Darent Valley Hospital, where I had Corey. The

“I learnt that style of vocal in the early years... I'm excited to be going and performing those songs now”

Ugly Sisters were outside to see if I was giving birth."

At the tender age of just 32, might the Blockbuster repertoire not be a little before the time of the former Hear'Say member and Emmerdale actress?

"A little perhaps, but my mum and dad played tracks from the 1970s... singers like Blondie and Suzy Quatro.

"And vocally, music from that time suits me more than many of the more

contemporary songs.

"I learnt that style of vocal in the early years when I started singing. I'm excited to be going and performing those songs now."

And, of course, there's the opportunity to work with the seemingly undimmed talent of Paul Nicholas...

"I'm very excited to be working with him. I can remember saying a long time ago I'd love to work with Paul Nicholas.

"I'm a massive fan of comedy and if we could have those sitcoms back I think it would be wonderful."

As with Blockbuster itself, there's a clear love and respect for much of what has gone before. Just sometimes, perhaps, there is a future in the past.

■ Blockbuster The Musical is at The Orchard from Thursday to Saturday, September 11-20. Tickets are priced between £20 and £32 plus a £1.50 per-ticket booking fee.

There are discounts available for groups, concessions, families and Premiere Card members.

To book, visit orchardtheatre.co.uk or phone the ticket office on 01322 220000.



DERBY DAYS: Paul Nicholas remembers the donkeys of the Isle of Sheppey

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Down-to-earth Kerridge has found his recipe for success

If Tom Kerridge was still drinking, now would be the time to crack open the bubbly and toast his success.

A new cookery book, *Best Ever Dishes*, an accompanying BBC Two series, a bustling pub, *The Hand And Flowers* in Marlow, and even an imposter pretending to be him on Twitter – it's fair to say that Kerridge is having a bit of a moment right now.

But after a massive 40th birthday celebration, which the jolly chef jokes he's "still suffering from", just a pint of diet Coke will do.

"I've knocked the booze on the head and thought I'd have a clean year. So far, we're doing alright," he says in his distinctive burr, laughing. "I haven't fallen off the wagon yet."

Giving up alcohol is just one thing that has changed in Kerridge's life since his first solo cookery series, *Proper Pub Food*, was aired last year.

For starters, he's lost six stone; partially through the abstinence and partially through swimming. Then there's the teeming mass of fans he's gained through his TV series, book and two Michelin-starred pub.

“It means the book is getting cooked from. I don't want it to be a coffee table book, I want it to be cooked from, covered in grease and flour and battered”

All this could go to a man's head but Kerridge is "still the same bloke", he's always been.

Indeed, before the cameras rolled on his first series, he insisted he remained himself and "not a cartoon character" on screen.

That people like the real him is a "huge compliment" and luckily, he likes them too.

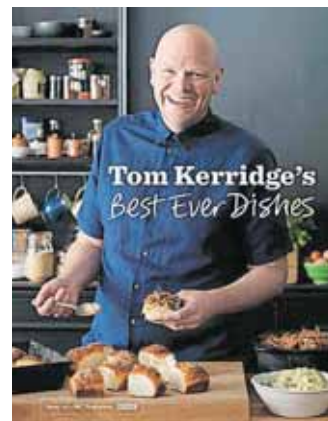
"I'm quite fortunate that I'm one of the chefs that actually likes people," says the cheerful 41-year-old, who is married to sculptor and *Hand And Flowers* co-owner Beth, who he says is a "really, really good cook."

"I'm quite a people person. I'd say every day I come across somebody who knows who I am and I have no idea who they are, and that's quite cool, because I get to find out."

Often people will stop to ask the chef about his favourite food or tweet him pictures of their versions of Kerridge's "lamb and Boulangerie potatoes" which they've served up for a Sunday roast.

And Kerridge, whose new book

Keeley Bolger talks to Tom Kerridge, the likeable TV celebrity chef who's been taken to the nation's heart, and meets a man currently having the time of his life



FROM THE HEART: Tom Kerridge is 'still the same bloke' he's always been, despite his astounding success

sees him adding twists on classic dishes like tomato soups and rice puddings, is eager to encourage his fans to head to the kitchen and just have a go.

"It's amazing, because it means that the book is getting cooked from," says Kerridge, of the feedback he's had from readers.

"I don't want it to be a coffee table book. I want it to be cooked from, covered in grease and flour and battered."

Equally not precious about his recipes, Kerridge hopes readers and viewers will focus on flavour rather

than agonise over appearance.

"I'll say this to all of my chefs here and customers alike, if you cook things with love and passion and you care for everything that you're doing, that will reflect on the flavour," he says.

"Some of the best dishes you'll ever have – a paella in Spain, a really good pizza in Italy or a really good stew in this country – never look like pretty pictures on plates, but they taste incredible – and you always remember what something tastes like."

"You come away thinking it feels

like this has been cooked with love – and that's the most important thing about cooking."

Focusing on flavour is a mantra that hasn't changed during Kerridge's career.

And while life shifts around him, he takes comfort in the things he's always held dear, such as the praise of his mum who raised him and his brother alone.

"She's a very proud mum, which is great," he says with a belly laugh. "Even as a 41-year-old bloke, your mum being proud of you is still cool."

The spice might be right but this is no place for a vegetarian

Café Mauresque

Location: Canterbury

By Maria Chiorando

As summer starts to wind down into autumn, alfresco dining options begin to dwindle, so Café Mauresque in Canterbury, with its pavement tables on cobbled streets, provides a decent option for those wanting to make the most out of the last vestiges of watery sun.

The restaurant serves Moorish cuisine, which comprises Moroccan and Lebanese food, alongside Spanish tapas-style dishes, providing a good selection of options.

We started with the vegetarian

platter – a generous serving of spiced aubergine stew, tabouleh salad, hummus, olives and feta, falafel, bread and almonds.

It was a good option: the olives and almonds were perfectly serviceable. The hummus was noticeably heavy on the tahini, which made it very nutty and quite tasty.

Tabouleh is a dish that is often done wrongly: too much cracked wheat when in fact parsley should be a major component and it should almost be like a green salad.

This, though, was well done here,

with good proportions and seasoned nicely with fresh lemon juice.

The standout on the platter was the aubergine stew, smoky and rich with a generous dusting of paprika – along with bread, this would make an excellent main.

For the main courses, the tagines for two are a popular option, but we decided to go for the fillet medallions and the vegetarian option of the butterbean and spinach stew.

The medallions were good pieces of meat, well butchered and cooked perfectly rare as specified.

It came with a side order of patatas a lo pobre, which were spiced well and extremely hearty.

Unfortunately, despite its promising name, the vegetarian stew was a bit of a disaster. Meat-free dishes are often an afterthought, and that certainly seemed to be the case here, with a dish that was both

conceived and executed badly.

It was the ubiquitous brown sludge that is often served up in the absence of meat, with an over-large portion of thick, starchy soup topped with more unidentifiable vegetables.

This is all too common – omnivorous dishes are often carefully composed, with the protein the star of the plate and well-balanced starch and vegetable accompaniments.

When there's no flesh, rather than building a dish around the various macronutrients, offering an interesting combination of different flavours and textures, there tends to be a glut of one solitary flavour, and it was singularly unappetising to be faced with a vat of the unctuous liquid.

This was disappointing given the restaurant advertising itself as a very vegetarian-friendly establishment,

although it has to be said that both the serving staff and kitchen were very accommodating when it came to removing cheese from the dishes.

The puddings fared better: a plum sorbet was delicious and three chocolate truffles were extremely rich – basically ganache-like, with honeycomb and other seasonings. They were excellent.

The wine list is expansive, with reasonable prices and a wide-enough range to suit most people's requirements.

In total, our bill came to £85, which was reasonable for the quantity of food ordered and, in the main, for the quality.

■ Café Mauresque
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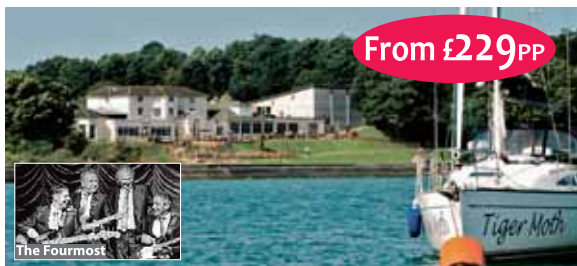
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See page 41 »



Going back to basics
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Rad-ical improvements will leave you with a warm glow

EVERYONE knows energy conservation around the home makes sense when it comes to cutting the cost of spiralling heating bills.

Energy-efficient boilers, better insulation and double glazing all play a part, but there is another way of saving money that is often overlooked: new radiators.

Replacing one or two radiators in a home because of corrosion, leaks or blockages, is not unusual, but in many cases that is simply tinkering with the oldest or worst radiators in your heating system. The others may well be teetering on the brink too...

Powerflushing will do a good job by removing the debris circulating in the heating system – both sludge and limescale build-up – plus eradicating cold spots at the bottom of radiators where sludge tends to settle.

But if your radiators were manufactured pre-2000, they will be less energy efficient by design, even if they are clean and debris free.

Replacing elderly radiators, especially if you're installing a new boiler, brings lots of benefits.

A new condensing boiler will not be able to operate to the high efficiency levels it is designed for if it's being held back by older components which will have a negative effect on both its efficiency and the heating bills.

Claims that new radiators save you money are more than just hot air.

All new radiators will offer some energy efficiency savings but the ground-breaking Radical range from Stelrad offers up to a 10.5 per cent

One of the best ways to reduce your household energy consumption – and cut your bills – is to replace your old, inefficient radiators. Technologically-advanced modern radiators can save you money and add the finishing touch to your home...



Today's new radiators

will usually be

smaller than the

oversized ones seen

in many older homes

energy saving compared to a standard radiator-based system, a fact independently verified.

Thanks to smart design, the award-winning Radical warms up faster than a standard radiator (the front panel heats up 23 per cent more quickly) and radiates up to 50 per cent more heat through the front panel. It also cuts heat lost from the back panel into the wall with the result that you feel warmer faster – and cheaper.

New radiators will usually also be smaller than the oversized ones seen in many older homes, mainly because modern models are able to provide more heat from a smaller radiator 'footprint' than the ones being replaced.

The superior water channel design



HOT TOPIC: Installing any one of the plethora of new radiators currently on the market will instantly improve your home's heating and save on bills

in modern radiators ensures hot water travels through radiators more efficiently, coming into contact with more of the metal so they can do their jobs properly.

The ability to run a squeaky clean heating system free of accumulated debris is a major plus for new radiators especially if you inherited your home from a series of owners that, over the years, that have not treated their heating system with the care it deserved.

Harmful debris can clog up old systems, with a build-up of black magnetite sludge from years of

internal rusting and a build-up in hard water areas of limescale encrustation.

Even if you invest in a new A-rated boiler it cannot deliver the energy efficiency you hope for if it's teamed with an elderly, clogged-up heating system.

And, of course, modern radiators look superb. Even the standard panel radiators of today look smart, boasting slimmer units, with rounded edges, and a good quality paint finish.

There's a whole range of designer radiators on the market that elevate

the radiator from a simple steel panel heat provider to an attractive centrepiece of your home's décor.

There are tubular radiators offering a delicate and modern version of the standard Classic Column design, flat panel and tube radiators adding a feeling of space to a room, vertical radiators growing in popularity, and the choice of towel rails growing by the day, from the standard inexpensive ladder towel warmers to quite exquisite designer bathroom radiators that provide a stunning feature in any bathroom or wet-room.

So when modernising your existing heating system, it's really worth considering investing in new radiators to keep you warm and cosy and save money!

Swale Heating, the largest independently-owned heating installer in the South East, has teamed up with Stelrad to make exciting range of radiators available as part of domestic heating system upgrades throughout the region. For more information about Stelrad and Swale Heating visit www.stelrad.com and www.swaleheating.com.

Digging deep to ditch holiday blues

GARDENERS who went on holiday confident that friends and family would water, deadhead and harvest their crops in their absence must be feeling pretty smug.

But what about those of us who didn't have the luxury of a mate to water the garden while we were sunning ourselves elsewhere? What about those who just didn't find time to install an automatic irrigation system?

Well, you now have to look at the mess that remains and consider what's worth saving and what isn't. Annual bedding plants in containers and baskets are unlikely to recover fully if the weather's been scorching and they've been left in the sun, so it might be a case of taking an executive decision, tipping them out and starting again.

Plants such as lobelia and soft, fleshy plants including fuchsias and tomatoes are much less likely to survive than drought-tolerant plants such as pelargoniums.

You may find a few bargains of late summer blooms in your local garden centre to brighten up the scene, but if you're on a budget it's probably better to invest in some spring bulbs for planting, or get a head start on

You've enjoyed a great break but have come back to disaster zone in your garden. **Hannah Stephenson** has tips to help...

autumn and winter planting designs.

If you're not going to use your containers for winter displays, clean them out, wipe them down and put them away. Don't leave terracotta pots out for pests like slugs and snails to hide under. If you leave them out too long, they'll just crack when the frost comes too.

Containers holding year-round-interest plants such as shrubs or evergreens may benefit from being submerged in a bucket of water to re-wet the compost, but it is difficult to tell if the compost is thoroughly soaked and it is important not to waterlog the plants.

After re-wetting, robust architectural plants such as phormiums and box can be lifted out of their containers with their root system intact so you can see if the compost has been completely soaked through.

Clematis in containers are more likely to survive a week without watering if they are in big pots and have other plants around them, says world famous, award-winning clematis specialist Raymond Evison.



"If a clematis is in a pot two-foot in diameter and two-foot deep it should survive well. Those in smaller containers, say 15 inches in diameter and 18 inches deep, will suffer some damage after a week of really hot weather with no water.

"Place other plant material around it in the pot, which will create a micro-climate so that the clematis has a cooler root system."

After a week with no water, the clematis will look pretty sorry for itself and new growth is likely to

have shrivelled up.

Give it a good soak, trim it down to around 18 inches and give it a feed with tomato or rose food and it should come back and may even flower again in October.

Border perennials and shrubs are much more likely to survive your absence, but if you have overgrown weeds on your return, pick them out to stop them shedding seeds which will cause you problems later. Deadhead all your border plants and give them a good water and they should recover.

Continue to deadhead roses and cut back finished summer-flowering perennials, removing supports which propped up the plants which have stopped flowering. These can be cleaned with a mild detergent and put away until next year.

If no one has picked your crops, you are likely to come home to a large amount of stringy, tough runner beans which will need to be put on the compost heap, and the plants will probably have stopped flowering.

Pick all the beans off the plants, give them a feed with a tomato feed and they may start producing again.

Dig up other vegetable plants which have succumbed to the prolonged hot weather, clearing vacant rows and refilling them with autumn and winter crops as soon as you can.

Some gardeners can become more relaxed about pest and disease control once they've had their two weeks holiday, but ignore them at your peril – you may be storing up problems that will remain dormant until next year. Cut off or prune out affected parts of diseased plants and burn or dispose of them so that overwintering spores won't survive.

Pest control is also important. Be aware that many biological controls become less reliable when the temperature drops as the predatory insects which provide the control then multiply more slowly. Take off shoots on plants which are infested with greenfly or blackfly and dispose of them.

If you've been one of the unlucky ones whose plants seem to have had it this summer, don't worry – you can steal a march on autumn and winter schemes which should keep the garden looking good later on in the season.

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HEARTBREAKING: You may have to re-evaluate what to do with wilted and damaged plants

Best of the bunch

Verbascum

THESE cottage garden favourites add a valuable element of height to planting schemes, their impressive flower spikes reaching up to 1.5 metres.

All are either biennial or shortlived perennials, flowering in the first or second summer after sowing.

They then die, although they self-seed readily. You can buy them in a range of colours and it's well worth checking out your seed catalogues if you want some new varieties.

They thrive in sun in well-drained, drought-tolerant soils low in nutrients, so don't need much looking after.



Some may not survive over the winter, but the more reliable varieties include V. chaixii 'Gainsborough', which produces pale primrose-yellow flowers and 'Cotswold Queen', which has striking yellow flowers and terracotta eye.

Good enough to eat

Blueberries

THESE delicious deep blue berries which can be added to summer pudding and other red fruit desserts are related to the wild, moorland bilberries, but form bushes rather than low, straggly plants.

Best planting time is late autumn to early spring, although container-grown bushes can be planted at any time when the soil is workable.

Blueberries thrive in well-drained, moist acid soil in a sunny, sheltered position and will grow to around 1.5 metres high.

You will have to be patient as bushes do take a while to start fruiting.

You should get some fruits several years after planting, but by the fourth or fifth year a bush should be producing up to 5lbs of the fruit a year from mid-summer to mid-autumn, depending on the type.



Remove the oldest branches in early spring when the bush is over three years old. Good varieties include 'Bluetta' and 'Bluecrop'.

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The end of summer doesn't have to signal the end of colour on the patio. With a little imagination, you can be enjoying your containers well into autumn and beyond. So says **Hannah Stephenson...**



AS summer draws to a close and plants in pots start looking tired, it's time to give your containers a fresh new look for autumn and winter.

As well as making new plantings, consider brightening up existing containers.

Give wooden troughs and windowboxes a good sand before repainting them in whatever colour takes your fancy, but just make sure it complements the area rather than standing out like a sore thumb.

Retro lovers may like to recycle items like food cans and tins, colanders, old metal buckets or bread tins, old wooden crates or even brightly coloured plastic trugs (with drainage holes in the bottom) to use as containers.

If you only want to replace certain plants which have gone over, dig them out carefully with a hand fork

If you're planting up containers in autumn, don't forget to add some bulbs which will give you colour

and then replace the old compost with fresh, preferably the type which contains slow-release fertiliser and water-retaining gel.

Fill in the gaps with temporary colourful autumn plants such as autumn cyclamen, pansies and violas, combined with dwarf marguerites and berried winter cherries.

Alternatively, once your summer annuals in pots are truly spent, plant up a cool mix of autumn stunners, combining flowers and fruits with ivies and other hardy foliage plants. Include colourful ornamental kales and cabbages, heucheras and cape

Perk up your patio pots for autumn



heath and, when the weather really cools down, shelter displays as much as possible to keep them frost-free.

Chrysanthemums, which went out of fashion for years as they have a reputation for being time-consuming and needing TLC in the greenhouse, have improved.

There are many varieties which come into their own in the autumn, producing masses of flowers from August until November, including C.

Mei-kyo, a pink variety.

Hopefully the hardy pansies and violas should last right through autumn until the beginning of winter.

All this should be complemented with eye-catching evergreen foliage plants as well as spring-flowering hardy primroses, polyanthus and winter-flowering heathers.

If you're planting up containers in autumn, don't forget to add some

bulbs which will give you colour from late winter through to spring.

The bulbous Reticulata irises flower in late winter and early spring and, being mainly blue, combine effectively with white and yellow Crocus chrysanthus cultivars.

Dwarf narcissi such as February Gold and Tete a Tete also brighten up spring planters, as do snowdrops and grape hyacinth, while tulips will carry the flowering season into

late spring.

Pint-sized blue Scilla siberica can be used to fill in around the base of deciduous pot-grown shrubs but also make good plant partners for dwarf, early flowering daffodils and Wanda hybrid primroses.

Cool planting schemes might feature purple, pink and silver, combining ornamental cabbages with white cyclamen, purple-leaved heucheras such as H 'Cajun Fire' or 'Shanghai' and silver foliage plants such as Cineraria 'Silver Dust'.

Ornamental grasses such as carex and festuca can also be added to drape over the edge of containers to add both colour, texture and movement.

Hopefully the hardy pansies and violas should last right through autumn until beginning of winter

And don't forget to use berries to brighten any patio display, from Callicarpi bodinieri 'Profusion', whose lilac flowers in summer precede pinkish autumn foliage and masses of dazzling purple berries in winter, to the winter cherry (Solanum pseudocapsicum), whose shiny orange-red berries will last several months. Many people buy them to add to their pots in autumn, when the berries are at their best.

Another great plant to include in autumn and winter pots is the Skimmia japonica subsp. Reevesiana which produces long-lasting clusters of bright pillar box red berries in winter, nestled among dark evergreen leaves.

This hard-working evergreen shrub goes on to produce deliciously fragrant white flowers in spring.

Get top marks for student style

Gabrielle Fagan highlights the importance a colourful room can have on your university-bound child

IT'S probably seems as though the years have flown – only a short while ago your little one was starting school and now that same youngster is leaving for college and looking forward to living independently.

Although your pocket and your heart may already have taken a battering as they excitedly prepare to leave the nest, you still have to perform one important last parental duty before you say goodbye – settling them into their new room.

Making it welcoming on that first day will lift their spirits and is a great distraction for you and them, especially if you're both apprehensive (and a bit emotional) about them leaving home.

And please don't underestimate the significance of the room, either.

My eldest daughter nearly abandoned university on the first day after discovering her allocated room was a tiny, shabby cell and not the gleaming, modern space pictured in the college prospectus, which turned out to be in short supply and all taken.

Luckily, a roll of lining paper and some sticky tape helped rehabilitate



the dingy walls, and this, together with a liberal sprinkling of colourful throws and cushions, was enough to stop her dropping out in decor despair.

"While moving into student accommodation is one of the most exciting life experiences, leaving home comforts behind as they step



into a stark, empty room can be a bit of a reality check," agrees Claire Hornby, creative stylist at Barker & Stonehouse.

"Aside from them meeting their new neighbours, the first thing on the 'to-do' list should be transforming that blank space into a stylish abode, that feels as cosy and



SPECTRUM: There is a host of items you can use to brighten young rooms

welcoming as possible.

"Of course, primarily it's about turning it into an attractive place to relax and study, but quickly ensuring it's a real haven can really help settle a youngster's first day nerves, as well as making parents feel better about the parting."

Swotting up on style is easy; high

street and online stores are bursting with bargains perfect for bringing essential colour and character to a room, no matter how drab.

You'll pass the parental test with flying colours if you leave them happily ensconced in a room that is so well kitted out, other students will flock to it...



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Still those HGVs keep on coming

SMARDEN, 11 times best kept village and popular Kent tourist destination, has suffered the lorry problem for decades.

Fifteenth-century houses have historically been damaged (up to twice a year) in the village centre and congestion caused and damage done by reversing articulated vehicles finding the bends impassable.

Most of the drivers arrive here by satnav, usually a car version, and a third of drivers are foreign. There is a designated route well signed around the village but still they come.

KCC has no money. The police have tight budgets.

All over Kent, damage is being done to irreplaceable, historically valuable county assets. The Kent Freight Action plan is to be welcomed.

But still they come!

What has to be done before the character of our rural communities is changed for ever by the curse of the lorries?

John Maxted, Smarden

New use for paper shop welcomed

THANKS for the great article and update on the splendid conversion of a very down and out newspaper shop, to what we hope will be a delightful cafe (KoS, Dame Kelly Holmes cafe, last week).

Dame Kelly can count on our custom. Any new business deserves support. I trust doom-monger councillor Chris Smith will rapidly be proved wrong.

Rod Norman, Tonbridge

Feeling pinch of green belt laws

THANK you for your impressive leading article 'What price the countryside as developers move in?' (KoS 17.08).

It was not only very timely but also very enlightening.

We found the comments by Stephen Williams, minister for communities and local government, and those by John Gilbey, leader of Canterbury City Council, most revealing.

They were strikingly different, with Cllr Gilbey, on the one hand, determined to push on with the hugely unpopular and environmen-

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Lorries: The blight of modern rural living

THANK you for the article in last week's KoS on heavy goods vehicles on our roads.

The experiences of the residents of Leeds and Graveney sound horrendous. I was beginning to think it was just us residents of Preston, near Wingham who suffered from this curse.

When we moved here almost 20 years ago, Preston was a rural community of about 700 inhabitants with a Post Office, butcher's shop, village shop, pub, farm shop and a horticultural nursery.

It was quiet, excepting the noise of large agricultural vehicles during harvest, which was, of course both expected and acceptable as it is a farming area.

At that time, the village was a desirable place to live and local house prices attracted a premium because they were in Preston.

There was, on the outskirts of the village a medium-sized operation called Sandwich and District Growers, or SDG, which offered cold-storage and distribution to local fruit and vegetable farmers. Its relatively small lorries would pass through the village, and sometimes, at night, the empty lorries would make a noise as they drove over manhole covers. This was an infrequent nuisance, however.

Unfortunately, SDG was subsumed into the Salvatore group of companies. It is now used by few local farmers and so the company has expanded into general haulage. Keeping up with DTT regulations, they now operate

44-tonne lorries which, on weekdays, seemingly endlessly parade up and down the 'main' road through Preston.

If it is not Salvatore lorries, then it is visiting ones. We are also subject to vehicles operated by Fowler Welch travelling to and from a distribution depot in Wickhambreaux.

Never have the residents been surveyed on their views, but their right to live a peaceful existence and enjoy the environment in which they live has been trampled for mere profit and gain.

This 'main' road has no footpath for most of its length and is wide enough for two cars to pass, but in places only just so. This is not a safe area for pedestrians or cyclists.

It is now almost impossible to achieve a full night's sleep, especially during the summer months, when keeping a window open to reduce the temperature is almost mandatory.

I have installed a sound level meter and I record the levels produced by various vehicles and pass these to the environment officers of Dover council.

Property damage, both direct and indirect are difficult to measure. My own experience is that when two vehicles attempt to pass, one will often choose the 'softer' option of a convenient front garden.

This is a blight on rural life, and must be stamped out.

Clive Taylor, Preston

tally damaging Canterbury District Local Plan (involving a massive incursion into highly productive Grade 1 agricultural land) and, on the other hand, the government minister insisting that local authorities had to work cooperatively with their communities to plan for appropriate housing development in the least environmentally damaging locations.

Cllr Gilbey came across as totally at odds with this clear guidance and oblivious to the reality that well-informed campaigners have convincingly shown that the Canterbury Local Plan is not based on robust evidence, as he claims.

For instance, the council can provide no evidence that it is required by the government to build 4,000 houses on the southern edge of Canterbury, as it so often claims, or that traffic problems in Canterbury district will be in any way reduced, which is an urgent need.

Stephen Williams has made it quite clear the number of houses to be built in Canterbury is a matter for local people to decide not Cllr Gilbey.

The whole growth-at-any-cost agenda being pursued by the current Canterbury City Council leadership threatens to destroy not just the countryside around Canterbury, but the very setting and proper functioning of this world-heritage city.

Moreover, the justification of the present Local Plan is based on substandard and manipulated data which undermines public trust in the plan-making process.

With regard to the Local Plan, Canterbury City Council needs to listen to the voice of the community, as it has been unmistakably expressed in the massive waves of public objection, which have inundated the council offices during the two consultation phases.

We were delighted to learn from your columns of Stephen Williams's stance which reinforces the legitimacy of this opposition.

It may not yet be too late for Canterbury councillors to reconsider the Local Plan before proceeding to the next stage, the Examination in Public, where the deep flaws in the plan and the lack of public support for it will be exposed at, or around, the time of the elections in May 2015.

All-in-all this was a great piece of journalism and it will stand for the future as a significant record.

Dr Wendy Le-Las, planning consultant, **Dr Geoff Meaden**, member of The Canterbury Society, **Emily Shirley LLB**, John Walker, deputy chair of The Canterbury Society, **Reverend Paul Wilson**, Baptist minister and former town planner

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles which tie in with our parent company Archant's overall mission statement.

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- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.
- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between

news, comment and advertising.

- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.
- 9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.
- 10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.



Folkestone sunset by Marion Haining, Folkestone

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ix35

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ix35 S 1.6 GDI

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Customer Deposit	£4,092.40	Optional Final Payment	£5,992.50
Total Deposit	£4,092.40	Duration of Agreement	36 months
Cash Price of Vehicle	£17,000	Representative APR %	5.9%*
Total Amount of Credit	£12,907.60	Fixed Interest Rate % p.a.	3.04%
Interest Charges	£1,686.90	Excess Mileage Charge Per Mile	14.5p
		Annual Mileage	10,000

Santa Fe

Personal Contract Purchase Representative Example
Santa Fe Style 2.2 CRDi

36 Monthly Payments Of	£299	Total Amount Payable	£30,932.40
Customer Deposit	£9,989.65	Optional Final Payment	£10,178.75
Total Deposit	£9,989.65	Duration of Agreement	36 months
Cash Price of Vehicle	£28,365	APR %	5.9%*
Total Amount of Credit	£18,335.35	Fixed Interest Rate % p.a.	3.04%
Interest Charges	£2,547.40	Excess Mileage Charge Per Mile	14.5p
		Annual Mileage	10,000



Motorline Hyundai – Canterbury 01227 817555 Units 2b & 2c, Westminster Road, Canterbury CT1 1YY
Motorline Hyundai – Maidstone 01622 624070 Bircholt Road, Parkwood, Maidstone ME15 9YN



Fuel consumption in MPG (l/100km) for Hyundai ix35 S 1.6 GDI: Urban 34.4 (8.2), Extra Urban 47.1 (6.0), Combined 41.5 (6.8), CO₂ Emissions 158 g/km. Fuel consumption in MPG (l/100km) for Hyundai Santa Fe Style 2.2 CRDi 5 seat: Urban 37.7 (7.5), Extra Urban 54.3 (5.2), Combined 46.3 (6.1), CO₂ Emissions 159 g/km. Fuel consumption: figures shown are based on official EU test figures. These are to be used as a guide for comparative purposes and may not reflect all driving results.
*You will own the vehicle when all payments are made. Models shown: ix35 S 1.6 GDI at £17,000 OTR in solid paint at no extra cost. Santa Fe Style 2.2 CRDi 5 seat 4WD manual at £28,365 OTR in metallic paint included at £585. On the road (OTR) prices shown include customer saving discounts where applicable. VAT where applicable, delivery, vehicle first registration fee, number plates and 12 months' Road Fund Licence. At the end of the agreement there are 3 options: (i) Renew: Part exchange the vehicle, (ii) Retain: Pay the Optional Final Payment to own the vehicle or (iii) Return the vehicle. Further charges may be made subject to the condition or mileage of the vehicle. Terms and conditions apply. Finance subject to status. Applicants must be 18 or over. Guarantees/Indemnities may be required. Hyundai Motor Finance RHI 15R. We can introduce you to a limited number of carefully selected finance providers. We may receive a commission from them for the introduction. All offers, finance and savings are subject to availability and are only available to private retail customers on new cars purchased and registered in the UK (excluding Channel Islands or Isle of Man), between 3rd July and 30th September 2014, inclusive, sourced through Hyundai Motor UK Ltd or its authorised dealers. Offers are not available for customers under the Hyundai Affinity Programme. 15 Year Warranty terms and exclusions apply. Please see www.hyundai.co.uk or ask your local Dealer.



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Fuel consumption figures for the Civic 1.6 i-DTEC Black Special Edition in mpg (l/100km): Urban 70.6 (4.0), Extra Urban 85.6 (3.3), Combined 78.5 (3.6). CO₂ emissions: 94 g/km. Fuel consumption figures sourced from official EU-regulated laboratory test results, are provided for comparison purposes and may not reflect real-life driving experience.
Model Shown: Civic 1.6 i-DTEC Black Special Edition in Crystal Black Pearl at £22,460 On The Road (OTR). **Terms and Conditions:** New retail Civic registered from 1 July 2014 to 30 September 2014. Subject to model and colour availability. Offers applicable at participating dealers and are at the promoter's absolute discretion. **Civic Black Special Edition Honda Aspirations (PCP):** Example shown based on Civic 1.6 i-DTEC Black Special Edition in Crystal Black Pearl at £22,460 total cash price (and total amount payable) with 37 months 0% APR Representative (interest rate per annum 0% fixed) with £0 (0%) deposit, £408.29 monthly payment, Guaranteed Future Value / Optional Final Payment of £7,761.73 annual mileage of 10,000 and excess mileage charge: 4p per mile. You do not have to pay the Final Payment if you return the car at the end of the agreement and you have paid off other amounts due, the vehicle is in good condition and has been serviced in accordance with the Honda service book and the maximum annual mileage has not been exceeded. Indemnities may be required in certain circumstances. Finance is only available to persons aged 18 or over, subject to status. All figures are correct at time of publication but may be subject to change. Credit provided by Honda Finance Europe Plc, 470 London Road, Slough, Berkshire SL3 8QY. Honda Finance Europe Plc is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Financial Services Register number 312541. **The 5 Year Core Package includes:** Servicing: All scheduled servicing, as detailed in the vehicles service book, will be covered for 5 years or 42,500 miles, whichever comes first. **Warranty:** In addition to the standard 3 year warranty the customer will receive a complimentary 2 year extended guarantee taking the warranty to 5 years or 90,000 miles, whichever comes first. **Roadside Assist:** In addition to the standard 3 years roadside assistance package the customer will receive complimentary HondaCare Assistance for a further 2 years, taking it to 5 years or 90,000 miles, whichever comes first. **The 4 Year Core Package:** The 5 Year Core Package is optional. **It is being offered for £555 including VAT** (total value £1,845 including VAT, resulting in a £1,290 saving for the customer) and is available to finance or non-finance customers. Please note, should you sell the vehicle during the period of cover, the package remains with the vehicle.

By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

Brand Focus

Hyundai i10

Price:	£8,595
Driving appeal:	★★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★★
How green?:	★★★★★
Best rival:	Skoda Citigo

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LOOKING UP: The Korean marque is aiming high with its model range including the elegant i40 Tourer (above) and its current star the i10 (below)

Rally win underlines ambition

HYUNDAI is currently celebrating its first ever World Rally Championship victory – a glorious return to top flight rallying after more than ten years' absence.

The Korean team did it in style too, with a first and second place in the Rallye Deutschland – its ninth WRC event of the new era – and virtually in the brand's backyard, having made Germany its home from home in order to create European style cars for European customers.

The latest of these will be the second generation i20 supermini, officially unveiled to the world at the Paris Motor Show in October.

What we already know is that, in typical recent Korean style, it will be a quantum leap from its predecessor in looks, quality and engineering, even though the original i20 – one of the brand's first 'made for Europe' models – was a big hit itself when it arrived just five years ago.

Nevertheless, it will still be put in the shade by a replacement that Hyundai claims will offer class-leading interior space, plus a host of high-technology and comfort-enhancing features.

Based on a new platform, the next i20 has a 2,570mm wheelbase – 45mm longer than its predecessor – to provide an airy cabin able to seat five in comfort.

It is also said to have the biggest boot in its class, at 326 litres; the Ford Fiesta, the sector's UK best-seller and the nation's biggest seller overall, offers 290 litres.

But it's the obvious style and quality on the next generation car that will scare the opposition, with options including a unique-in-class panoramic sunroof that can be tilted or opened fully.



Industry watchers have monitored Hyundai's progress for a while though, noting a desire to move away from its value brand roots, through the mainstream and upwards; its new rallying profile won't hurt that drive one bit.

But the line-up of cars does a lot of the talking too: the elegant i40 Tourer winning friends with its lifestyle estate lines and company car user/chooser tax efficiencies.

The classy Sante Fe SUV oozes quality and looks imposing on the road, while another success story is the ix35 SUV, which arrived in 2010 and quickly erased memories of its underwhelming predecessor, the Tucson.

The brand also has a powerful contender in the family hatchback or VW Golf segment: two generations of the i30 three and five-door hatchback and its Tourer estate spin-off have been the engine of Hyundai's upmarket ambitions, and also

launched the whole European focussed 'i' car series.

But the showroom star of the moment – at least until the next i20 arrives – is the second generation i10 city car, the subject of this week's model focus.

It's good looking, capacious and sophisticated for a small hatchback, with a good range of power and an attractive starting price £8,595.

This little five-door car must be a source of great concern to bigger market players such as Toyota and Volkswagen, which have resorted to collaboration and cloning with other brands in order to justify and spread the cost of developing a city car, where small profits mirror the scale of the cars themselves.

So, if Hyundai chooses to develop such a good city car single-handedly – even if its underpinnings inspire the next Picanto from sister brand Kia – where else might its ambitions take it?

Hyundai arrived as a value brand but rallying and European focus show its intent to drive upmarket...

Other view...

the Petrolhead

Sorry, but Hyundai will have to tuck many more rally wins under its belt to make it a premium and much sought after badge

She says

I do think the i10 is rather cute and the new i20 is smart, but Hyundai styling is still not European enough for my tastes

the Eco-warrior

Hyundai must be applauded for the 'Blue Drive' eco line-up it has developed and sells, usually at very competitive prices.

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Official Fuel Consumption in MPG (l/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km) for the 208 range are: Urban 32.8 – 78.5 (8.6 – 3.6), Extra Urban 54.3 – 88.3 (5.2 – 3.2), Combined 44.1 – 83.1 (6.4 – 3.4) and CO₂ 149 – 87 (g/km).

MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only, and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions. #Terms and conditions apply, participating dealers only or visit www.peugeot.co.uk. *The first year Road Fund Licence (RFL) is included in the on the road price. The Dealer will provide customers with a cheque equivalent to twice the current RFL cost. The customer must apply for years 2 and 3 RFL. Just Add Fuel (JAF) is subject to status. *Minimum age 21, 25 or 30 on selected models, maximum age 75. Policyholder must have a minimum of 2 years NCD to use on the vehicle. All drivers must meet eligibility criteria including minimum 2 years' full UK licence, driving convictions/claims limits. Excesses apply. 3 years motor insurance is provided and underwritten by U K Insurance Limited, which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. A guarantee may be required. Written quotations available from Peugeot Financial Services, Quadrant House, Princess Way, Redhill, RH1 1QA. JAF is incorporated into a Personal Lease contract. 208 Active 1.0 VTI 3dr including Metallic Paint, customer initial payment £950, £500 Peugeot initial payment contribution, optional final payment £5,341. 35 monthly payments payable. If you choose to pay the optional final payment, you can pay an annual payment equivalent to one of your monthly payments but will not own the car. Ownership is possible with JAF Passport, ask us for details. Rentals quoted for a typical customer and will vary according to age, postcode, initial rental and annual mileage. Excess mileage charges may apply. Routine servicing included only. Excludes wear parts. This offer is not available in Northern Ireland. Offer available on cars ordered by 30/09/14. Calls may be recorded for training purposes. Information correct at time of going to press.



THE CAT THAT GOT THE CREAM: Peugeot is aiming to move upmarket and its latest models, including the new 208, are well built and well finished

Peugeot 208... where luxury comes cheaper

French 'lion brand' may be aiming upmarket but you don't have to buy the poshest trim to get the best buy, reveals
Steve Loader

PEUGEOT 208 STYLE 3-DR 1.2VTi

Price: **£13,445**
Driving appeal: **★★★★**
Image: **★★★★**
Space: **★★★★**
Value: **★★★★**
Running costs: **★★★★**
Reliability: **★★★★**
How green?: **★★★★**
Road tax: **£20 (zero year one)**
Best rival: **Suzuki Swift**

Kent dealers

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PEUGEOT is keen to move upmarket and even the newly launched 108 city car highlights this ambition.

And it's not about snobbery or profitability; all sorts of value brands and the imminent threat of low cost cars from China are forcing former mainstream brands to look upwards.

But does this mean we can no longer afford to buy brands like Peugeot that we have loved and stayed loyal to?

To put this to the test, I picked on Peugeot's best seller, the 208 supermini: having previously reviewed high spec 208s, including the wonderfully versatile GTi – a worthy and belated successor to the much-loved 205 GTi – I decided to spotlight a more modest member of the line-up in the form of the Style.

OK, it's not the cheapest 208: that's the £9,995 Access three-door – £10,495 if you want a five-door – which lives up to its name ie gives access to a 208 but not much more. Curiously, you get stuff like cruise control and remote central locking but no air con.

Most would-be buyers attracted by that sub-£10k headline price though will swiftly move on to the better equipped Active, where you start to get some of the goodies expected from a car that oozes the quality and style that Peugeot is using to drive its lion badge upmarket.

Moving a little higher, you come to the lower/mid price Style trim (from £13,445) reviewed here in its cheapest form: the three-door 1.2VTi 82. This also happens to be the 208 entry model if you want the 82bhp 1.2 litre three-cylinder petrol engine – the pick of the powertrains for value, vibrancy and economy.

Style trim brings alloys, the key to the making the most of the 208's chic look and upmarket stance, plus luxury touches like leather trimmed steering wheel and gear knob, digital radio and big infotainment touchscreen and – one of my Peugeot favourites – a Cielo panoramic roof, which makes the 208's already airy cabin feel enormous.

Key to this is not just the amount of window glass, but the unusually long stretch to the wheelbase achieved by the 208 designers, which has delivered excellent rear legroom.

Interior trimming is at the high level we have come to expect from recent Peugeots, though I've said before that I hate how the otherwise futuristic dashboard butts up clumsily into two nasty panels that fit over where the door mirrors are attached.

Some drivers may also find they have to do a bit of fiddling with the seat and steering wheel adjustments to ensure an unobstructed view of the instrument panel.



FirstGEAR

Motoring news



21st-century Twin

RENAULT'S all-new Twingo city car (from £9,495) arrives at the end of this month and is 10 times more interesting than the old model.

Developed jointly with Smart, Renault says the rear-engined and driven five-door is closer to the original and much-loved Twingo of 1993 and the Renault 5 before that, yet very much a car for 21st century cities – compact, nimble, efficient, safe and fully connected to the outside world.



450h sounds good

LEXUS has upgraded its mid-range version of the RX 450h and added temptation... all at no extra cost.

New fixtures on the RX 450h Advance (£48,495) include 15-speaker Mark Levinson premium 7.1 surround sound – alone worth £1,000.

Then there are new 19-inch alloys, plus interior and exterior cosmetics and the choice of either a sunroof or fixed panoramic roof.

Unchanged is the powerful yet economical 295bhp petrol-electric hybrid powertrain.



Back to the future

CITROËN is celebrating the 40th anniversary of its stunning CX saloon, and yet it still looks like a car from the future.

On top of that aerodynamic, eye-catching rocketship bodywork, it also set new technological standards in 1974 with a turbo-charged diesel engine, a GTi variant and an updated version of the French marque's legendary 'magic carpet' hydropneumatic suspension, and went on to be voted European Car of the Year.

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Representative example: Mercedes-Benz A 180 SE

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The new C-Class

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Representative example: Mercedes-Benz C 220 Saloon BlueTEC Sport

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£349.00	£31,950.00	£4,753.00	£2,190.38	£15,400.00	£25,006.62	£35,182.38	£180.00	£95.00	5.4%	3.20%

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Official government fuel consumption figures in mpg (litres per 100km) for the Mercedes-Benz range: urban 13.0(21.7)-68.9(4.1), extra urban 23.9(11.8)-88.3(3.2), combined 19.8(14.3)-78.5(3.6). CO2 emissions 334-92 g/km. Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors.

Mercedes-Benz UK Ltd, Tongwell, Milton Keynes, MK15 8BA are the firm responsible for making this financial promotion and will act as introducing agent. Whilst this offer is only available through Mercedes-Benz Finance, we do arrange finance on behalf of other finance companies as well. Models featured are a Mercedes-Benz A 180 SE with manual transmission at £20,715.00 on-the-road & a new C 200 Sport Saloon with manual transmission at £29,495.00 on-the-road including optional metallic paint at £645.00. (On the road price includes VAT, delivery, 12 months' Road Fund Licence, number plates, first registration fee and fuel). ^Free servicing available from participating retailers only, on a Mercedes-Benz Service Care Plan. Free Servicing based on 3 services over 36 months on A-Class, excluding A45 AMG 4Matic models. *Based on a Mercedes-Benz Agility agreement and 10,000 miles per annum. Excess mileage charges may apply. †Payable if you exercise the option to purchase the car. ††Includes optional purchase payment, purchase activation fee and Retailer deposit contribution. Personal lease contract plan. Alternative contract lengths available. Images featured include non-standard options not included in the finance example. Some combinations of features/options may not be available. Vehicles must be credit approved by between 28 August and 30 September 2014, registered by 31 December 2014. Credit provided subject to status from Mercedes-Benz Financial Services UK Ltd, MK15 8BA. Guarantees and indemnities may be required. Offer subject to availability and cannot be used in conjunction with any other published Retailer offers. Failure to make payments may affect your credit rating.



LIBERATOR: Spacious modern cars like this multiple-award-winning Skoda Octavia are within reach of disabled people and their families

Motability – a great burden lifted

UNTIL the arrival of Motability, mobility for the disabled was a huge physical and financial burden.

At a stroke though, this scheme revolutionised the way disabled people and their families could live their lives.

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The scheme's regular payments

can also take care of everyday running costs, from insurance, maintenance and repairs, to breakdown assistance – a huge reassurance when motoring costs are soaring.

What is more, Motability does not insist the disabled person is the driver; the car is made available for

the benefit of that person, which means up to two other named drivers can be on the car's insurance cover instead of the disabled person.

For more about this liberating scheme for disabled people, read on to find out the facts in this special supplement.

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SO WHAT'S IT TO BE? A smart Peugeot 308 – current European Car of the Year – trendy Renault Captur crossover, or the practical Nissan Note? The choice, as they always seem to say, is yours...

GETTING out and about can be more enjoyable for disabled people with a reliable new car leased through Motability.

The latest Motability list features more than 2,000 cars from more than 30 manufacturers.

This includes 600-plus automatic models available to lease; more than 80 available with no advance payment, such as the Vauxhall Meriva 1.4 Exclusiv, which includes helpful features, such as electric power steering and hill-start assist, and the spacious Nissan Note 1.2 Acenta.

A wide range of fuel efficient cars are also available to lease, such as

Offering flexibility and choice

the practical semi-automatic Peugeot 2008 1.6e-HDi Active – available at £299 Advance Payment.

Disabled people who receive either the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance, the Enhanced Rate of the Mobility Component of Personal Independence Payment, the War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement or the Armed Forces Independence Payment can exchange their weekly mobility payment to lease a new car through Motability.

There are three pricing bands:

- Cars that cost less than the mobility allowance – more than 150 cars available to lease at a fixed weekly amount for the whole of the agreement. This means the remainder of the allowance, including any increases, will be paid directly to the customer by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
- Cars that cost the same as the mobility allowance – more than

300 cars. Customers simply swap all of their weekly mobility allowance, including any increases, for the car of their choice.

- Cars that cost all of the mobility allowance and also have an Advance Payment – customers can increase their choice of cars by paying a non-refundable upfront payment known as the Advance Payment, covering the difference between the allowance amount and the total

cost of the lease.

Regardless of cost or car choice though, all Motability customers enjoy the same worry-free package including insurance, breakdown cover, servicing, tyres and wind-screen replacement.

There are also around 500 Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles available to lease on the Motability Scheme, and more than 500 vehicle adaptations to choose from, with over 150 at no additional cost.

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*Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer, also excludes Hyundai ix35. Terms and conditions apply. Vehicles shown for illustration purposes only. Please call for details.



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To qualify for this offer you must be in receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance, War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement, Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP). Advance Payment (AP) valid for applications to Motability until 30 September 2014. Models shown are Citigo 3 door SE 1.0 MPI 60PS manual with optional metallic paint (£490), Style Pack 2 with 15" Auriga alloys and temporary spare wheel (£550) and Winter Pack incl. front fog lights, heated front seats and electrically adjustable door mirrors (£300). Fabia Hatch shown is SE 1.2 12V 69PS manual with optional metallic paint (£525), black protective side moulding (£50), 16" Elba alloy wheels (£230), front fog lights (£170). Rapid Spaceback shown is 1.2 TSI 86PS manual with optional metallic paint (£525), protective side mouldings (£75), panoramic glass roof (£700) and 17" 'Camelot' alloy wheels (£600). Rapid shown is Elegance 1.2 TSI 105PS manual with optional metallic paint (£525) and protective side moulding (£75). Roomster shown is S 1.2 12V 69PS manual with optional metallic paint (£525), front fog lights (£170), Black roof rails (£230) and Black protective side moulding (£50). Octavia shown is Elegance 1.6 TDI 105PS manual with optional metallic paint (£525), bi-xenon headlights, AFS and LED daytime running lights (£1,190) and 18" Golus alloy wheels (£350). Yeti shown is Outdoor Elegance 1.2 TSI 105PS manual with optional metallic paint (£525) and part-silver roof rails (£160). Superb shown is Elegance 2.0 TDI 140PS manual with optional metallic paint (£525). Selected models only available from stock. Models shown are not UK specification.

Official fuel consumption in mpg (litres/100km) for the ŠKODA range: Urban 21.7 (13.0) to 74.3 (3.8), Extra Urban 40.4 (7.0) to 94.2 (3.0), Combined 30.4 (9.3) to 88.3 (3.2). CO₂ emissions for the ŠKODA range 217 to 85g/km. Standard EU Test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

Motability

PICKING your Motability vehicle will involve many more factors than those faced by the average motorist.

For a start, the disabled person might not actually be driving the car: up to two nominated drivers can drive a Motability vehicle, but the disabled person qualifying for the scheme does not have to be one of them.

Those drivers may even be friends or relatives, and parents or carers can apply on behalf of a child aged three years or older.

The car only has to be used for the benefit of the disabled person, such as a shopping trip or collecting a prescription – they don't even have to be in the car. A third insured driver can be added for a small payment.

Here are a few tips on car types that may then help your choice:

SMALL CARS: Tend to have the lowest Advance Payments, running costs and CO2 emissions. Two and three-door cars generally have wider doors with larger opening angles. These may make access easier, but closing the door and fitting in narrow parking spaces may be harder, while four-five-door cars benefit from superior back seat access – useful if you have more than one passenger.

MEDIUM CARS: Often sold as hatchbacks and will have a slightly bigger boot than a standard small car. The same doors argument applies as for small cars.

Refining your possibilities



PRACTICALITY VERSUS STYLE: The Fiat Qubo, bottom right, and Skoda Roomster, main picture, are brilliant for those with mobility issues, but is the Volvo V40 Cross Country, bottom left, more pleasing to be in?

FAMILY CARS: Large four-door saloons or five-door hatchbacks, considerably larger than medium sized cars. Hatchbacks usually have more boot capacity.

ESTATE CARS: Usually longer than a standard saloon or hatchback, with useful space for mobility aids in the boot, but this can add to the car's bulk – take a test drive before committing.

MULTI-PURPOSE VEHICLES (MPVs): Ranging from small to large, MPVs can seat up to nine people. The seats are higher, with more headroom, legroom and width. Some have large sliding side doors.

4X4 AND SPORT UTILITY VEHICLES (SUVs): The term '4x4' is usually used to describe vehicles designed for off-road use, which generally have higher ground clearance. Until recently, most had 4-wheel drive, but many people now buy for the SUV styling and opt for front-wheel drive only variants to save fuel.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES (WAVs): Cars converted to carry passengers travelling in their wheelchair or those who wish to drive from a wheelchair. WAVs may be best if you have trouble getting in and out of the car from your wheelchair and would prefer to remain in it when travelling as a passenger. The Motability website has a specific WAV Search.

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VAUXHALL

Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO₂ emissions (g/km). Vauxhall car range (excluding Ampera): Urban 12.7 (22.3) - 76.3 (3.7). Extra-urban 23.9 (11.8) - 91.1 (3.1). Combined 18.0 (15.7) - 85.6 (3.3). CO₂ emissions 373 - 88g/km.

Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors. Vehicles shown for illustrative purposes only, and may be fitted with optional equipment. Brilliant paint, metallic or pearlcoat two-coat paint and parking distance sensors included with each lease. Tri-coat premium paint available at extra cost. The facilities offered are for the hire (bailment) of goods. The Motability Contract Hire Scheme is administered by Motability Operations Limited (Registered Company No. 1373876). City Gate House, 22 Southwark Bridge Road, London, SE1 9HB. Offer valid 1 July – 30 September 2014. To qualify you must be in receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance, the Enhanced Rate Mobility Component of the Personal Independence Payment, the War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement or the Armed Forces Independence Payment which will be taken in lieu of the four weekly rental. Full written details, including terms and conditions, are available on request. All information correct at time of going to press.

58 Week ending September 7, 2014

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Online assistance is at hand

DISABLED car buyers can't easily trek around many different dealers to find their ideal car so it's great that Motability's website (www.motability.co.uk) can help draw up a short list.

Its search function allows a fast check through 2,000 or so eligible vehicles, taking account of buying parameters and the specialist needs of Motability users.

Search by car details takes a consumer-style approach and includes:

- What kind of mobility allowance the user has
- What level of advance payment the user intends to pay, if anything
- Preferred car type, make, model and number of doors
- Whether the user wants a manual, semi-automatic or automatic gearbox
- Whether the driver is under-25
- But there are two other search programmes: Search by Accessibility Needs, taking account of car measurements; and Search for a

Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV).

- There is also excellent advice on what type of car to look for, in language more relevant to disabled users, such as how hatchbacks have a lift-up rear door or 'hatch', which could make it harder for a wheelchair user to open/close or access items, or problematic when opening in the garage.

■ For more tips like this though, see our earlier page on which car class might be best for you.

EASY CHOICE: Motability.co.uk's search function makes it easier to decide whether roomy MPVs like the Renault Grand Scenic, top left, and Peugeot 5008, top right, or an SUV such as the funky Hyundai ix35 is best for you

THRILL-SEEKER.

OR HILL-EATER?

Decisions decisions. Get rip-roaring go-kart handling, or be ready for whatever Mother Nature throws at you for just £99 Advance Payment.*

Both the new MINI 3-door Hatch – with more power, more MPG and more go-kart thrills – and the new MINI Countryman with four doors, more space and ALL4 all-wheel drive are available to you. But sorry, only one per driver – so it's decision time.

Contact your Motability specialist Arden Maidstone, BMW and MINI Dealer
Email: martin.pallister@ardenbmw.co.uk
External Tel: 01622 717222 Fax: 01622 791324
or visit us at www.ardenmaidstonebmw.co.uk to take a test drive

Official Fuel Economy Figures for the MINI Range: Urban 27.2-72.4 mpg (10.4-3.9l/100km), Extra Urban 47.9-91.1 mpg (5.9-3.1l/100km), Combined 37.7-83.1 mpg (7.5-3.4l/100km). CO₂ Emissions 175-89 g/km. Figures may vary depending on driving style and conditions. *The MINI 3-door Hatch and new MINI Countryman are available from £99 Advance Payment under the Motability Contract Hire Scheme. Models featured are the MINI 3-door One Hatch and the new MINI One Countryman under the Motability Contract Hire Scheme. All prices are correct at time of going to press for orders placed and accepted between 1 July and 30 September 2014. The facilities offered are for the hire (balloon) of goods. The Motability Contract Hire Scheme is administered by Motability Operations Limited (Registered Company No. 1373876), City Gate House, 22 Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 9HB. To qualify you must be in receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance, the Enhanced Rate of the Mobility Component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP), the War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement (WPMS) or the Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP), which will be taken in lieu of the four weekly rental. Terms and conditions apply and are available on request. *Test drive subject to status and availability.

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Official fuel economy figures for the BMW range available on the Motability Car Scheme: Urban 34.9-64.2mpg (8.1-4.4l/100km), Extra Urban 55.4-83.1mpg (5.1-3.4l/100km), Combined 45.6-74.3mpg (6.2-3.8l/100km). CO₂ emissions 145-99g/km. Figures may vary depending on driving style and conditions. *The BMW range available on the Motability Contract Hire Car Scheme starts from £999 Advance Payment for the BMW 116d SE 5-door Sports Hatch. Prices correct at time of going to press for orders placed and accepted between 1 July 2014 and 30 September 2014, subject to availability and change without notice. All models on the Motability Contract Hire Scheme include optional fleet tax paid at no extra cost. The fleet tax offset are for the hire (balloon) of goods. The Motability Contract Hire Scheme is administered by Motability Operations Limited (Registered Company No. 1373876), City Gate House, 22 Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 9HB. To qualify you must be in receipt of either the Higher Rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance, the Enhanced Rate of the Mobility Component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP), the War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement (WPMS) or the Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP), which will be taken in lieu of the four weekly rental. Terms and conditions apply and are available on request. BMW EfficientDynamics reduces BMW emissions without compromising performance developments and is standard across the model range.



TEST DRIVE TIME: Will it be the trendy Skoda Yeti, pictured right, capacious Fiat 500L, above, or highly accessible Vauxhall Meriva, pictured below, that ticks all the right boxes for you?

So you've done your research. Time now for the test drive; do take it, because what looks good on paper or online might still not be right for you, especially in terms of access.

Here are Motability's own check list for how the make the most of your dealer visit:

- Book an appointment, so you get plenty of time with the car and to talk about it – write down any questions you have and take these with you as a reminder.
- Visit several Motability dealers – it will give you a better idea of which type of car best suits your needs.

Now take the test drive...

- Take someone with you – choosing a car is a big decision and it helps having someone there to talk things over with.
- If you wish to nominate a driver or drivers they should come with you and test drive the car too.
- If you use a wheelchair or any other



mobility aid, take it with you so you can try the car for size and accessibility.

- Make a checklist of any specifics or extras you want in your new car (adjustable seats, electric windows, etc). This

will help your dealer in finding you a suitable car.

- Make the most of the dealer's expertise – don't be afraid to ask questions, and do take a test drive or ride in every car you are interested in.
- Ask about trade-in – you may be able to use the value of your old car against the Motability Advance Payment of your new one.
- If you're planning to name a driver under the age of 25, ask about young driver restrictions.
- Don't feel pressured to make a decision – the final choice is yours, so don't rush into it.

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BOOK A TEST DRIVE



The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the cars shown are: Urban 47.0 (6.0)– 70.6 (4); Extra Urban 64.02 (4.4)–88.3 (3.2); Combined 56.49 (5.0)–83.1 (3.4). The official CO₂ emissions are 115–90g/km. EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008 test environment figures. Fuel consumption and CO₂ may vary with driving styles, road conditions and other factors. Advance payment offers are only valid for Motability applications to 30 September 2014 and are correct at time of going to press. Motability is a trademark of Motability. Registered charity number 299745.



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Public Sector

LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

Kent and Medway **NHS**

NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 25 September 2014

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust responsible for providing mental health and a range of other services to the people of Kent and Medway, will be holding its AGM at Oakwood House, Maidstone, at 6pm.

The meeting will include a review of the past year and a report by the Director of Finance.

Anyone wishing to attend must register, as delegate places are limited. To confirm your attendance, email communications@kmpnt.nhs.uk or call 01622 724100.

PLANNING



THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE) (ENGLAND) ORDER 2010

The following applications have been submitted for consideration by the Council:

Y14/0964/SH† - Hermitage House Hermitage Close Hythe Kent CT21 6HZ - Felling of a Conifer tree situated within a conservation area followed by the planting of replacement tree as part of landscaping scheme

Y14/0917/SH - The Bandstand The Leas Folkestone Kent - Listed Building Consent for the erection of a memorial plaque.

Y14/0928/SH* - East Station Goods Yard Southern Way Folkestone Kent - Mixed use development comprising 41 dwellings (31 affordable housing; 10 open market housing) and 1000 sq m commercial space (Class B1/B8) with associated access, car parking and landscaping.

Y14/0754/SH* - The Thorn Stone Street Stelling Minnis Canterbury Kent - Change of use and conversion of existing egg production unit to nine storage/distribution units (Class B8) following demolition of part of 'Building 3' and provision of loading and parking area, continued use of Building 1 for B1 and B8 use and alterations to the existing vehicular access and formation of new vehicle access to existing house.

Any representations should be made in writing to the Head of Planning, Shepway District Council, Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2QY or emailed to planning@shepway.gov.uk. Comments should be made in writing within 21 days from the date of publication. It should be noted that any representations received will be made available for public inspection.

Some applications can be viewed at other locations in addition to the Civic Centre, Folkestone. The applications are marked as follows:

- The One Stop Shop, Magpies, Church Approach, New Romney

† - Hythe Town Council Offices, Stade Street, Hythe

Applications can be viewed and comments made online at <http://searchplanapps.shepway.gov.uk/online-applications/>.

The applications marked (*) do not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area in which the land to which the application relates is situated.

C Lewis, Head of Planning
Shepway District Council

Grab your running shoes and get on your marks for half-marathon

ONE of Kent's most high-profile athletic events, the Folkestone Rotary Half Marathon, is looking set for a bumper year, with registrations already up on 2013.

Ray Johnson, race director, said: "We now have more than 250 entries to date, which is fantastic and we still have entries coming in thick and fast."

"The main charities that this year's event will be supporting are Step Short and The Gurkha Memorial Fund and runners also have the opportunity to raise money for their chosen charity."

"It is possible to enter online at www.nice-work.org.uk or turn up on the day, although pre-registration is recommended."

"We have many entrants from London and some from further afield, as well as local runners from various Kent running clubs."

"The youngest runner registered is four and the oldest is 76 – there is no maximum age."

"We would encourage everyone to promote this event as much as possible, as not only is it great for running enthusiasts, but also family, friends and public alike."

"Last year, we raised more than £38,000 for good causes and we are hoping to exceed this amount this year."

"We are confident that this year we will be able to reach more than £250,000 in total raised since the event was started in 2006."

"This year the race will be passing under the recently-erected Step Short First World War Memorial Arch, which was opened by Prince Harry on August 4, and in addition passing a few of the new Folkestone Triennial exhibits."

"We encourage early registrations, which you can access through the website. Runners are able to enter on the day at The Grand from 8.30am to 9.30am. We welcome the public to spectate and support the runners."

The race, which is on Sunday, September 28, offers £100 each for the first man and woman home. It starts at 10am, while there is a children's race at 10.30am.

The course has been measured to comply with UK Athletics rules and commences on The Leas before going through part of Folkestone town centre, down the Road of Remembrance and along the seafront to Hythe.

There is a loop near The Green and back up Albert Road, then back along the seafront to Folkestone, before returning up the Road of Remembrance (the 'sting in the tail') at a little over the 12-mile mark to finish up outside The Grand.

Folkestone Rotary Club was formed in 1923 and last year celebrated 90 years. To enter the half-marathon or to learn about the club, visit www.folkestonerotary.org.

There are still some places available for runners of all ages in this year's Folkestone Rotary Club event, which is on course for a record turnout



THEY'RE OFF!

Organisers are hoping this year's event will be the best ever



TAKE PART: There is a children's race as well as the adult event



PEMBURY racer Raoul Owens claimed a long-awaited, and richly deserved, first podium of his Formula Renault 2.0 Northern European Cup (NEC) season at Most in the Czech Republic at the weekend with a terrific second place finish in round 13 – having earlier secured his maiden pole position.

Horrendous weather was a key feature of the penultimate weekend of the season in Eastern Europe but the Mark Burdett Motorsport driver conquered the tricky conditions to break his 2014 duck and claim his first silverware of the campaign.

"It's definitely good to finally get a podium in this season, and the pole position brought everything up a notch," said the Pembury racer.

"Finally, we managed to get a clean run in qualifying and also a clean race in the second one, the car felt very nice to drive and it was great to show what we know we're capable of, and have been all season."

Race two, scheduled for an early start on Sunday morning, had to be postponed in the end due to a major downpour which delayed the schedule. Race organisers therefore took the decision to move the planned third race to the Nurburgring season finale in Germany three weeks from now.

Owens started on pole position, his first ever in Formula Renault 2.0 NEC, thanks to a sensational showing in the second qualifying period on Saturday, 30th August.

Lapping with a time of 1m46.470 seconds (averaging 142.418 km/h), he claimed the top spot on the grid by 0.138 seconds.

Due to increasingly heavy rain and copious amounts of spray, the race started behind the Safety Car and when the action properly got under way Raoul made his pole position count by holding the lead, before being edged back by Alex Albon at the end of the opening lap.

With the rooster tails of spray making a re-challenge a tough prospect, the Bright Spark Ventures supported driver instead took the sensible approach in protecting his top two placing and focusing on putting together clean



Pictures: INSIGHT F1 MOTORSPORT REPORT

SECOND PLACE: Raoul Owens (second left) on the podium at Most

Raoul celebrates his first podium finish of season

and consistent laps. Soon enough, the safety car reappeared after an incident and that's how the encounter finished.

"Qualifying on pole was a huge uplift for the entire weekend," explained Raoul.

"In recent qualifying sessions we have struggled a bit, so it was really nice to get the first pole and especially in such tricky conditions too. I made a pretty good start to race two, it was a rolling start from behind the safety car and I led most of the first lap.

"Unfortunately, I went a bit wide after contact with a freshly painted kerb and that allowed [Alex] Albon to get past. He was really quick so I decided to be sensible about it, keep the second and play it cool. With about 10 minutes remaining there was a big accident, so we had the safety car again which bunched everyone up, so there

wasn't too much racing in the end. Second is pretty good."

For round 12 on Saturday afternoon, Raoul qualified 11th fastest in the rain-hit session and was confident of gains into the upper order in the first of the weekend's contests. Racing well into the top seven on lap one alone, bitter disappointment followed when an excursion after straying too far onto the kerbs resulted in contact with the barriers.

Finding himself a long way down the order in 24th position, the Briton raced strongly – despite his car suffering the ill-effects of the lap one damage – and managed to climb into the top 15.

There are just three weeks to wait until the finale of the Formula Renault 2.0 Northern European Cup, which will take place at the Nurburgring in Germany over the weekend of September 20-21.

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Gills youngster Davies praised by Taylor for sterling performance

Picture: ADY KERRY

YOUNG centre-back Callum Davies has impressed Gillingham manager Peter Taylor with his attitude.

The Gills boss has told of his delight at the performance of Davies as captain during the 1-0 win over Stevenage on Tuesday.

Davies, 21, led the team out at the Lamex Stadium and helped ensure a clean sheet as Gills went through to the second round of the Johnstone's Paint Trophy.

Taylor told the club website: "I've been impressed with his attitude ever since I've been here.

"When I first arrived I decided to put Leon Legge at centre-half, so he was always playing catch up.

"He then lost a bit of form because he hasn't played so many matches and he was desperate to play, which I totally understood.

"His attitude has always been first-class. He has now done a pre-season and played a lot of football and I've been impressed.

"He's perhaps been unlucky not to have had more league matches before now – I very nearly started him last Saturday as a central defender, but in the end I knew I needed him on Tuesday night and because of his attitude I decided to make him captain and I thought he played like one."

Gillingham were due to play Coventry City in Sky Bet League 1 on Friday night.

The match, played before Sky TV cameras, marked Coventry's return to the Ricoh Arena after a 13-exile caused by a rent dispute.



STANDING TALL: Callum Davies

Kent fail to make one-day final after dismal showing with bat

KENT turned in a poor performance in their bid to reach the final of the Royal London One-Day Cup on Thursday, losing to Warwickshire by six wickets at Edgbaston.

Having won the toss and chosen to bat, Kent performed wretchedly and were in danger of total humiliation as they staggered to 161-8.

Only a typically gutsy 40 not out from Sam Billings, who has had an excellent season in this competition, pulled Kent to some form of respectability. It did, though, beg the question of why he came in as low as No 8 in the order.

Warwickshire were rarely troubled in their pursuit of the winning total, the sole ripple in their otherwise serene progress being the dismissal in quick succession of Jonathan Trott and Varun Chopra.

The home side cruised home with three-and-a-half overs and six wickets to spare.

Kent captain Rob Key was forthright in his assessment of the match:

"We were very poor with the bat. I thought it was a fantastic pitch – there was something in it for everyone... a brilliant one-day wicket.

"But what did we have? Twenty, 20, 30, three – it's shocking, really, that sort of scorecard."

Kent had lost to a strong side, without question, but the manner in which they subsided was a huge disappointment.

To supporters, though, who have witnessed such spectacles so many times before, it might not have come as the greatest surprise.

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